Wilhelm Stäglich

Auschwitz

A judge looks
At the evidence

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Foreword

"Auschwitz – it was Hell." For all its subjectivity, this remark attributed to a former inmate does not begin to characterize the emotion-charged ideas the word Auschwitz evokes today. Auschwitz symbolizes more than the multitudinous agonies suffered in concentration camps, not only German camps during the war, but concentration camps everywhere, past and present: It has come to symbolize the "murder of millions of European Jews." Everyone "knows" that we are not "supposed to" voice the slightest doubt regarding the legend that is Auschwitz, or even relate personal experiences that might not be entirely in line with it. Indeed, to commit such heresy is to run the risk of losing one's livelihood. For the powers that be have ordained that Auschwitz must be viewed in one way only.

That is exactly what should make us leery. Truth does not require coercion to be accepted. Its persuasiveness does not depend on constant repetition of bold-faced claims. All that is really needed for truth to prevail is to show the facts, and let common sense do the rest.

What then could be more natural than to examine the factual basis of the allegation that Auschwitz was the site of the most extensive and atrocious massacre of Jews in history? Almost everybody is familiar with this claim, but nobody can say just what evidence there is to support it. People have come to regard the whole subject as taboo. I noticed this was true even of the judges who imposed a relatively harsh penalty on me for having published, in the form of an open letter, a *de visu* account of the Auschwitz parent camp that conflicts with the now current picture of Auschwitz.[*]

When I wrote that letter, it was far from my intention to dispute the extermination thesis *per se*. Anyway, that would have been outside the scope of my account. However, the reaction it provoked made me realize for the first time what importance the powers that have for decades been determining our destiny as a nation place on the Auschwitz taboo. That realization awakened in me an irresistible urge to research the historical sources for the allegation that Auschwitz was an "extermination camp," and come to grips with it. I believe my findings deserve to be brought to the attention of the general public.

At the outset, let one thing be noted: Contrary to popular belief, Auschwitz was *not* a single camp under central administration. Rather, it consisted of a number of individual camps of various sizes, some of which had considerable organizational autonomy. The actual Auschwitz camp —the so-called *Stammlager* ("parent camp" or "main camp," also known as "Auschwitz I")— was situated about 2 kilometers southwest of the town of Auschwitz in

[*] *It appeared in the monthly periodical *NationEuropa*, Vol. XXII, no. 10 (October 1973), pp. 50-52. For an English translation of this document, see Appendix III below.—T.F.

Upper Silesia. Not this camp, but the Birkenau camp, located about 3 kilometers west of the town, is supposed to have been the site of the extermination of the Jews. There was a series of other camps in the Auschwitz region, some of which had been established for special purposes, such as Raisko, for agricultural experiments, and Monowitz, for the production of synthetic rubber. All these camps were associated, more or less loosely, with the main camp. Thus it is hardly correct to designate "Auschwitz" as an "extermination camp," pure and simple, as people often do, perhaps from ignorance. Basically, "Auschwitz" was a network of labour camps established in the industrial area of Upper Silesia for the German war economy. The Birkenau camp ("Auschwitz II"), which is the focal point of the extermination claims, served primarily as an internment camp for specific groups of prisoners, such as Gypsies, women with children, as well as the chronically ill and those who were otherwise incapable of labour. It also served as a transit camp and, initially, even as a prisoner of war camp. In the spring of 1943, several crematoria —allegedly containing "gas chambers" for the extermination of Jews— were put into operation there, while the original camp crematorium in "Auschwitz I" was shut down in July 1943.

The real subject of our investigation is the charge that Birkenau was an "extermination camp." This work is not intended to give a definitive picture of Auschwitz – something that would, in any case, be beyond the limited resources at my disposal. It also has no pretensions to being a *Geschichtsschau* in the Rankian sense, that is, an attempt to depict Auschwitz "as it really was." Rather, it is an effort to survey, examine, and assess as objectively as possible *the evidence that has thus far been presented* for the claim that Auschwitz was a "death factory."

Unfortunately, the Institut für Zeitgeschichte [Institute for Contemporary History] in Munich has not seen fit to grant my request for its assistance. My correspondence with the institute is so revealing that I must share it with my readers (see Appendix III). Likewise, I was refused permission to examine relevant trial records (see Appendices IV and V), and therefore had to rely on published collections of trial documents, such as they exist.

I am aware, of course, that Auschwitz is not the only camp that has been linked to the "extermination of the Jews." Nevertheless, it assumes such importance in this connection, both qualitatively and quantitatively, that I am convinced that the extermination thesis stands or falls with the allegation that Auschwitz was a "death factory." That alone should justify my restricting the scope of this inquiry.

Finally, let it be noted that the present volume is the work not of a professional historian, but of a jurist with an interest in recent history. Naturally, I have tried to observe the rules of scholarship. My intention is not to polemicize, but to take stock of the evidence that has thus far been presented for the claim that Auschwitz was a "death factory," as objectively as possible, and draw the logical conclusions from it.

If certain passages in this work strike the reader as polemical, he would do well to ask himself whether such lapses are not unavoidable given the nature of the subject.

Dr WILHELM STÄGLICH
Hamburg, December 1978

Chapter One

The Making of A Myth

In every period of history, men have succumbed to certain illusions. Perhaps the most widespread illusion of our time is that people are now more thoroughly, comprehensively, and, above all, accurately informed than ever before. In reality, just the opposite seems to be the case.

The quality of the information disseminated *via* modern techniques of communication stands in inverse proportion to its quantity. This general observation also applies to the veracity of specific pieces of information. Anyone who has seen an event reported about which he has firsthand knowledge will attest that much of the depiction was at variance —even radically so— with what actually happened.

This is hardly the place to examine the manifold causes of such distortion. Of one thing there can be no doubt: All politically related "information" that appears in the mass media today is designed to serve a purpose. The vaunted "independence" of the communications media is little more than a soothing copybook platitude. Though every once in a while ostensibly dissenting viewpoints are aired in the mass media, so as to give a certain substance to pretensions of "balance," that does not alter in the least the fact that the clique which, by virtue of its enormous wealth, largely controls the communications media is primarily interested in manipulating individuals and nations to attain its political objectives.[1] The ultimate achievement of propaganda is, as Emil Mair-Dorn has so vividly put it, to "make millions of people eagerly forge the chains of their own servitude."[2]

A most depressing example of a people forging its own chains is to be seen in the almost fanatical tenacity with which so many Germans cling to feelings of guilt that have been implanted in them about an epoch in which bitter necessity impelled the German people to seek an independent path to the future. Many things go into the make-up our national guilt complex, but more than anything else it is the prod[6]uct of deliberate misinformation about the

[1] Especially after World War I, the often bizarre workings of this "supra-national power" were vividly exposed in numerous books, articles, and speeches. It is significant that for a long time after World War II there was no public discussion of this subject. Although in recent years a relatively large number of books about it have appeared, and been widely circulated, for instance, those of the American journahst Gary Allen, one rather gets the impression that they are intended to divert our attention from the real "wire-pufiers." In any case, the facts they "reveal" are for the most part already quite well known. Possibly these "expos6s" owe their appearance to rivalry or competition among group~ of powerful men. For an extensive survey of the subject see Gerhard Müller, *Uberstaatliche Machtpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert* (2nd ed., rev., 1975).

[2] Emil Maier-Dorn, *Welt der Täuschung und Lüge*, p. 8.

German past. As a result of this artificial and utterly baseless guilt complex, at no time since the fall of the Third Reich has the German people been able to bring itself to pursue its own political interests. Mendacious propaganda of a kind and scope perhaps unique in history has insidiously —and thus all the more effectively— deprived it of the national self-confidence required for such a policy. Just as an individual cannot get along without a healthy measure of personal self-esteem, so a people without a sense of national self-esteem cannot maintain its political independence. In the long run, this political propaganda disguised as "historiography" can have a positively lethal effect on the nation.

Pivotal to the German national guilt complex is the Auschwitz Myth. During the war, a number of concentration camps were established near Auschwitz, an industrial town of some 12,000 inhabitants situated about 50 kilometers west of Cracow.[3] In the course of the 1960's, but especially after the so-called Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965, the name of this town evolved into a synonym for "genocide." In the concentration camps of the Auschwitz region —so the story goes— millions of Jews were systematically killed on orders from the leadership of the Third Reich. Today the word "Auschwitz" has the almost mystical force of traditional fables and legends, and it is in this sense, too, that the phrase "Auschwitz Myth" should be understood. Indeed, the Auschwitz Myth has become a quasi-religious dogma. Skepticism about it is not tolerated, nor often expressed. Cleverly using the Auschwitz Myth to represent itself as the sacrosanct embodiment of "Humanity" —and the German people as the embodiment of utter evil— international Jewry has laid claim to a privileged status among nations. Similarly, forces inside Germany, as well as outside, have used the Auschwitz Myth to forestall or suppress any objective discussion of the Third Reich era. Whenever Germans show signs of deviating from what Golo Mann calls the "sociopedagogically desirable view of history" ("das volkspädagogisch erwünschte Geschichtsbild"), one need only utter the catchword "Auschwitz" to remove all doubt as to the basic depravity of the German people.[4] Not only does the very mention of "Auschwitz" call a halt to rational discussion of the Third Reich, since beside "Auschwitz" this symbol of absolute evil, everything else seems inconsequential; it can also be used to cast a shadow over any other aspect of the German past. So long as the Auschwitz Myth retains its terrible power, the recovery of our national self-esteem is virtually impossible.[5]

Origins of the Auschwitz Myth

When one traces the evolution of the extermination legend, it is really quite difficult to comprehend [7] how the Auschwitz Myth came to occupy such a towering position in it. To be sure, as early as 1944 the inventors of the legend had decided on Auschwitz as the site of the "extermination of the Jews" and were clever enough to bolster this allegation with an official U.S. Government publication, the "War Refugee Board Report" as Dr. Butz has

[3] Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung*, p. 116.

[4] See Caspar Schrenck-Notzing, *Charakterwäsche*, p. 11.

[5] Interestingly, the English writer Richard Harwood [Richard Veran] views the legend of the extermination of the Jews as a threat to all nations. He believes that it produced a delusion that nationalism inevitably leads to genocide. According to Harwood, the spectre of "Auschwitz" is being used to suppress and destroy the sense of nationhood which is a people's "very guarantee of freedom." See Richard Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?*, p. 2.

shown.[6] However, the WRB Report, which we shall discuss at greater length in the next two chapters, was consigned to oblivion after the war. At least in Germany, the "gas chamber" propaganda largely centreed around camps in the Reich itself, even though the International Military Tribunal (IMT) had asserted in its decision, on the basis of an affidavit from Rudolf Höss, the former commandant of Auschwitz, that some 2,500,000 Jews were murdered in "gas chambers" at the camp.[7] Almost immediately after the war, severe tensions arose between the western Allies and Soviet Russia, with the result that a line of demarcation, the "Iiron Curtain" was drawn between their respective spheres of influence. Partly for that reason, partly for others, the western Allies never got to inspect the Auschwitz area. Here one recalls the statement of Stephen F. Pinter, a U.S. War Department attorney who was stationed at Dachau for 17 months:

> We were told there was a gas chamber at Auschwitz, but since that was in the Russian zone of occupation, we were not permitted to investigate, since the Russians would not permit it.[8]

Thus there was some uncertainty about what position the Soviets would ultimately take on the "extermination of the Jews" especially since Stalin himself was reputed to be an "anti-Semite."

For whatever reason, the Auschwitz Myth was not widely publicized until well into the 1950's. At least, it still had not acquired the crucial significance attributed to it today. No distinction was as yet made between the various camps when the "Final Solution" —the physical destruction of European Jewry allegedly ordered by the leadership of the Third Reich— was discussed. They were all supposed to have played basically the same role in this enormous "murder plot." Every concentration camp, it was said, had one or more "gas chambers" in which Jews were asphyxiated with volatile cyanide (in the form of "Zyklon B" a proprietary fumigant) or carbon monoxide — *in usu vulgi* : "gassed." Even in the later editions of his "standard work" *The Final Solution*, Gerald Reitlinger claims:

> Thus, eventually, every German concentration camp acquired a gas chamber of sorts, though not on Auschwitz lines. The Dachau gas chamber, for instance, was preserved by the American occupation authorities as an object lesson, but its construction had been hampered and its use restricted to a few experimental victims, Jews or Russian prisoners-of-war, who had been committed by the Munich Gestapo.[9]

In Reitlinger's hedging of his statement about the Dachau "gas chamber" one sees a rearguard action. As early as 1960, the Institut für [8] Zeitgeschichte

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[6] Arthur R. Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 67ff.

[7] International Military Tribunal, Nürnberg; *Der Prozeß gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof Nürnberg* (cited hereafter as IMT), vol. I, pp. 282-283; ibid., vol. XXXIII, pp. 275-279 (Document 3868-PS). [It should be noted that here, and throughout, Stäglich cites the German edition of the IMT volumes, especially since the pagination of the published German-language transcript of the "Proceedings" (vols. 1-XXIII) does not correspond to that of the "Official Text in the English Language." In both editions, however, the "Documents in Evidence" sections (vols. XXIV-XLVII) are identical.]

[8] Writing in the correspondence section of the American Roman Catholic weekly *Our Sunday Visitor*, June 14, 1959. See Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 47. Pinter's letter is quoted at length by Heinz Roth, *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher*?, p. 111.

[9] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 149. The German version of this so-called "standard work" bears the misleading sub-title, "Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas." The original English edition was published at London in 1953 by Valentine, Mitchell & Co. Ltd. under the title *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe*.

in Munich felt itself called upon to issue the following statement, perhaps in response to the findings of the French historian Paul Rassinier:

> Neither in Dachau nor Bergen-Belsen nor in Buchenwald were Jews or other inmates gassed. The gas chamber in Dachau was never finished and put into operation... The mass extermination of the Jews by gassing began in 1941-42, and occurred in a very few places, selected exclusively for the purpose and outfitted with the appropriate technical facilities, above all in occupied Polish territory (but nowhere in the German Reich proper).[10]

If Reitlinger's statement was a rearguard action, the statement of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte was a general retreat. What made it so sensational was that not only had a host of former inmates testified that "gassings" took place at concentration camps in the Reich, but several commandants of these camps even signed "confessions" affirming the existence of the alleged "gas chambers."[11] At the Nuremberg IMT trial, the British Chief Prosecutor Sir Hartley Shawcross specifically cited *Dachau, Buchenwald, Mauthusen*, and *Oranienburg* as places where murder was "conducted like some mass production industry in the gas chambers and ovens."[12]

For a long time, Auschwitz and other camps that had existed in the German-occupied eastern territories played a subordinate role in the extermination legend. But after Dr. Martin Broszat, a leading member of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, made the statement quoted above, the view that any concentration camps in Germany were "death factories" became completely untenable.

However, the claim that some six million Jews had fallen victim to the "Final Solution" was so vital to the interests of the inventors and promoters of the extermination legend that they absolutely could not abandon it. Not only was that charge a means of holding the German people in political subjugation; it had also become a highly lucrative source of income for international Jewry. The six million figure was the basis of the "reparations" which the Federal Republic of Germany obligated itself to pay to the State of Israel and the Jewish international organizations, in addition to compensation payments to individual Jews, beginning in the early 1950's and continuing even today.[13] For that reason alone, the six million figure, about which certain writers had already expressed wellfounded and earnest doubts on other grounds, could not be abandoned, even after it was established definitely that none of the camps in the German Reich proper were "extermination camps."[14]

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[10] Letter from Dr. Martin Broszat, then an associate member, now director, of this institute, published in the correspondence section of the Hamburg weekly *Die Zeit*, August 19, 1960 (No. 34), p. 16. [In the North American edition, August 24, 1960 (No. 34), p. 14.] See Butz, *op. cit*., p. 47; also Paul Rassinier, *The Real Eichmann Trial - The Incorrigible Victors* p. 89; and Roth, pp. 19-23.

[11] As the French university professor Robert Faurisson recently emphasized in the monthly periodical *Défense de 1'Occident*, June 1978, p. 35. The "deathbed confessions" of the camp commandant of Mauthausen, SS-Standartenführer Franz Ziereis, even appeared as a pamphlet.

[12] IMT vol. XIX, p. 483. See also Joe J. Heydecker and Johannes Leeb, *Der Nürnberger Prozeß*, p. 487, and the same authors' *Bilanz der Tausend Jahre*, p. 455.

[13] On this subjeet see Franz Scheidl, *Der Staat Israel und die deutsche Wiedergutmachung*, also his *Deutschland und die Juden*, pp. 266-270; and J. G. Burg, *Schuld und Schicksal*, 1962, pp. 155-163. *The Allgemeinejüdische Wochenzeitung* of July 4, 1975 estimated that 50.1 billion marks in reparations have already been paid and indicated that the total would amount to 85.5 billions.

[14] As Dr. Peter Kleist, for example, did long ago in his book *Auch Du warst dabei*. In *Das Drama der juden Europas*, Rassinier conducted a thorough investigation of the 6,000,000 claim, using Jewish statistics. In my opinion, all such estimates are of only slight importance, since there are no reliable Jewish population statistics. Moreover, the decisive question is not how many Jews

Thus the necessity of sticking to the six million figure led the extermination mythologists to shift their emphasis from the camps in Germany to the camps in German-occupied Poland. Auschwitz, undoubtedly the largest camp complex, became the focal point of the extermination allegation. Since the Poles had set themselves to the task of refashioning part of the camp complex into an "Auschwitz Museum" —a move that also signaled the Soviets would hold to the extermination legend, [9] something about which there had been some uncertainty after the IMT trial— the extermination propagandists no longer had any reason for restraint.

Although the Auschwitz propaganda campaign was aggressively pursued from the very beginning, it still had a lot of catching up to do. To be sure, "extermination camps" in occupied Poland had been mentioned in the so-called Gerstein Report, a document allegedly composed by a onetime SS man named Kurt Gerstein. At first, nobody seemed to take this document seriously, and it was not even admitted in evidence at the IMT trial.[15] At least three versions of it were circulated: two French versions and one German version. Numerous passages in these texts vary from one another.[16] According to the French version published in 1951, the following "extermination camps" were in existence as of August 17, 1942:

1)Belzec, on the Lublin-Lwow road. Maximum per day, 15,000 persons
2) Sobibor, I don't know exactly where it is, 20,000 persons a day
3) Treblinka, 120 Kilometers NNE of Warsaw
4)Maidanek, near Lublin (in preparation)[17]

One notes that the supposedly well-informed Gerstein does not include Auschwitz on this list, though "mass murders" are now alleged to have begun there in the spring of 1942 (The first "gas chambers" were, it is claimed, two converted farm houses).[18]Since, according to this document, Gerstein was

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lost their lives during World War II, but, granting that some did, how they perished. On the problem of Jewish fatalities in the war see Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-240.

[15] IMT, vol. VI, pp. 370f., 400f., 467. Characteristically, the Nuremberg Tribunal did not admit into its official documentation a memorandum Gerstein allegedly composed, in bad French, but only two invoices for shipments of Zyklon B, to the Oranienburg and Auschwitz camps, that were appended to his statement. See T. XXVII, pp. 340-342 (Document RF 350/1553-PS).

[16] See Hans Rothfels's article "Augenzeugenbericht zu den Massenvergasungen" in *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (No. 2 of 1953), pp. 177ff.; and Rassinier, *Das Drama der juden Europas*, pp. 71ff. For an extensive discussion of the value of the "Gerstein Report" as a source see Udo Walendy, *Europa in Flammen*, vol. I, pp. 422-429; and Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 105ff.; 251-258. The latter book contains an English translation of the "Gerstein Report" that was presented by the prosecution at the NMT "Doctors Trial" (NMT, vol. I, pp. 865-870, Nuremberg Docurnent 1553-PS). The version in the German edition of Butz's book was translated by Udo Walendy from this English translation of the French text. It is not a German "original." Adalbert Rückerl has recently attempted to rehabilitate the "Gerstein Report" by alleging that Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel accompanied Gerstein on his trip to the "extermination camps" and later corroborated the essentials of Gerstein's report. Yet Pfannenstiel would hardly have made certain of these statements voluntarily, though he could have done so under duress. I have before me a communication Pfannenstiel wrote to Professor Rassinier, from which it is evident that he dissociates himself unequivocally from the alleged "Gerstein Report." At that time, as during the war, Pfannenstiel was Professor of Hygiene at University of Marburg. It is peculiar that the public is being introduced to this "witness" to the "gassings" only now when he is presumably deceased. See Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, pp. 14; 61-66.

[17] In the second French version this passage is missing. See Rassinier, *Das Drama der Juden Europas*, pp. 133ff. The German version Rothfels cites in V*ierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* and the English version Butz reproduced are in accord here.

[18] As is claimed, for example, in the autobiography attributed to Rudolf Höss, *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 123; 154ff. See also Helmut Krausnick in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. II, p. 416.

responsible for the procurement and distribution of Zyklon B, he certainly would have been aware of the existence of Auschwitz. As a matter of fact, Auschwitz is mentioned as an “extermination camp” at the end of the English version of the document —along with Theresienstadt, Oranienburg, Dachau, Belsen, and Mauthausen-Gusen![19] This version of the “Gerstein Report” (the one that appears in Dr. Butz' volume) was used by the Americans in the “trials” they conducted on their own after the IMT proceedings.

As the years went on, Auschwitz by and large receded into the background. A decade after the war, the public knew virtually nothing about it. This may be attributed partly to the fact that the Soviets did not permit outsiders to inspect the grounds of the Auschwitz complex. What is more, none of the German and Austrian soldiers interned at Auschwitz, which served for several months as a Soviet prisoner of war camp, found any traces of the alleged mass murders, not even in Birkenau, supposedly the actual extermination camp, or else did not report them after their release.[20] Of course, remnants of the crematoria were there to be seen, but the quantity of rubble did not match what would have been left behind by crematoria of the size required for the mass extermination of several thousand people per day.[21]

One may well ask: If this allegation were true, why then did not the Soviets immediately exhibit the camp to journalists from all over the world and place the evidence of the alleged mass murders under interna[10]national control? I shall leave it to the reader to answer this question for himself. Even less comprehensible is the fact that the majority of Germans offered virtually no resistance to the Auschwitz propaganda campaign that began in the middle of the 1950's. They did not ask why Auschwitz was suddenly being brought forward as the greatest extermination camp of them all, a camp in which Jews were “gassed” by the millions. Everyone seemed to have forgotten the old German proverb: *Wer einmal lügt, dem glaubt man nicht*[*]. Given the fact that the falsehoods about Dachau, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, and other camps lasted hardly a decade, similar charges about Auschwitz should have been regarded with the utmost suspicion.

Previous assertions of this kind in the literature on the subject are contradictory indeed. The War Refugee Board Report mentions in this respect only one large barrack erected for this purpose in "Birkenwald." See the report of the U.S. War Refugee Board, *German Extermination Camps: Auschwitz and Birkenau* (cited hereafter as WRB Report), p. 9. According to Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 166, there were "two converted barns," however. Oddly enough, Bernd Naumann's reportage on the trial mentions ordy one "converted barn." See Naumann, *Auschwitz: Bericht über die Strafsache Mulka und andere vor dem Schwurgericht Frankfurt*, p. 9. The above should give one some indication of how "reliable" is the testimony on this central question in the alleged extermination of the Jews.

[19] Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

[20] As the late Jochen Floth, who was Chairman of the *Deutsch-Völkische Gemeinschaft*, stated in a special bulletin issued by his organization (*Deutsch-Völkischer*, no. 2 of 1975), of which I have a copy in my files. Other witnesses from among the former prisoners of war in Auschwitz are named in the periodical *Denk Mit!* (No. 3 of 1975), p. 65. See also Franz Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. IV, p. 59; and Heinz Roth...*der makaberste Betrug aller Zeiten*, pp. 94 and 140.

[21] On this see Emil Aretz, *Hexen-Einmal-eins einer Lüge*, pp. 55ff. According to reports of former Auschwitz inmates, a crematorium was destroyed in an "uprising" toward the end of 1944. See Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner, *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, pp. 167, 273ff, 282ff, and 385. Also Kazimierz Smolen, *Auschwitz, 1940-1945*, p. 81.

[*] *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*; literally, “He who lies once is not to be believed twice.”—T.F.

Of course, here one must take into account the fact that even today many Germans are in the dark about how shamelessly they were deceived in regard to the concentration camps in Reich territory. Countless Germans still believe the lies they were told, for neither the Government nor the mass media gave Dr. Broszat's revealing admission the publicity it deserved.

However, that alone is not enough to explain the establishment and entrenchment of the Auschwitz Myth. Not even the segment of our population most familiar with the Dachau "gas chamber" hoax, for example, is immune to the Auschwitz Myth. Anyone who follows the nationalist press knows that even there "Auschwitz" is often used as a synonym for "genocide."[22] In part, this implicit endorsement of the Auschwitz Myth may be the result of a thoughtlessness that is in itself unpardonable. But there is also some genuine belief involved, as became clear to me from discussions with editors of those publications. To support their position they usually cited the findings of the first Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. Indeed, the actual reason for the widespread public acceptance of the Auschwitz Myth may be that the decisions of German courts enjoy the unlimited confidence of the German people. Despite many miscarriages of justice, judicial authority and objectivity are still considered above suspicion. Whether this trust is justified when it comes to such blatantly political trials as the so-called Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial is a question that will arise many times in the course of our investigation. At this point, it should be enough simply to note that it can never be the task of the courts to pronounce the final verdict on historical matters, something that certain groups consider the real purpose of the so-called "Nazi Crimes of Violence Trials" ("NSG-Verfahren"), of which the Auschwitz Trial is the prime example.[23]

Considering the importance of the Auschwitz Myth, and its strange etiology, it is high time that the facts be systematically investigated and scrutinized. To be sure, other writers —for example, Rassinier and [11] Butz— have brought many significant facts to light. However, since their studies embraced the whole problem of the German concentration camps, their treatment of Auschwitz was necessarily limited to the essentials, and could do with some supplimentation. Beyond that, I should like to treat the Auschwitz Myth from a different point of view, as will become evident in the following pages.

Before going into details, let us take an overall look at the "official" image of Auschwitz and how it has been fashioned.

Form and Content of the Auschwitz Myth

The "Official" Auschwitz Image

Undoubtedly, the image of Auschwitz that haunts the public mind today is the result of the persistent "educational campaign" conducted by the press, radio, and television, the so-called mass media. This image, which, of course,

[22] For instance, in the *Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung*, July 19, 1974 (No. 29), p. 3 ("Ein heißes Eisen"). This example is by no means unique.

[23] "NSG" is the abbreviation of the term "Nationalsozialistische Gewaltverbrechen" ("Nazi Crimes of Violence"), which is supposed to designate a species of crime unique in history.

still meets with a certain amount of skepticism,[24] follows a set pattern that is, as we shall see, of very obscure origin. It has been supplemented and broadened by a literature, full of contradictions, that ranges from accounts of personal experiences to discussions of particular aspects of the camp to general treatises with scholarly pretensions. Considering the importance of the subject, there are fewer of the latter than one would expect, and they are also quite superficial as historiography. The superficiality of these "standard works" may be attributed to the fact that the authors do not approach their subject in the manner of professional historians, but of propagandists. Because nearly all of them are Jews, there is an inherent bias.[25]

Why professional historians steer clear of this subject is rather obvious. On the one hand, if a historian affiliated with an institution dared cast doubt on the image of Auschwitz that a worldwide propaganda campaign has made into a taboo —something he could not fail to do, given the lack of genuine evidence to support it— he would be out of a job. On the other hand, if the same historian lent his authority to the "official" version of Auschwitz, he would destroy his professional reputation. How many people can be expected to risk their livelihood or reputation?

In his book on the Auschwitz Trial, which he covered for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the journalist Bernd Naumann gives in a nutshell the version of Auschwitz propagated in the mass media and "scholarly" tomes, which the court took for granted throughout the proceedings:

> The camp was set up in May, 1940, at Auschwitz, 37 miles west of Cracow. Convicted criminals were installed as its prisoner hierarchy. The first shipment of Polish inmates arrived on June 14, 1940. Twelve months later, Hitler decided on the "final solution of the Jewish problem."
>
> Auschwitz became the chosen centre for the planned mass extermination, and Himmler therefore ordered that the camp be expanded. The adjacent town of [12] Birkenau was converted into a gigantic barbed-wire enclosure, a barracks town able to accommodate 100,000 inmates. It became known as Auschwitz II, and the original camp as Auschwitz I.
>
> On September 3, 1941, more than four months before the infamous Wannsee Conference at which Heydrich* outlined the details of the "final solution" about 600 prisoners were sent to the gas chambers —this in the nature of an "experiment." The same fate befell a group of Jews from Upper Silesia, who, in January, 1942, were gassed in a converted barn in the razed village of Birkenau. The schedule for the final solution was about to become Eichmann's grim reality. Endless shipments of prisoners, mostly Jews, began to pour into the extermination camp.
>
> On May 4, 1942, the first "selections" were conducted at the Auschwitz concentration camp, and the "selectees" gassed. Only a week later, an entire transport, 1,500 men, women, and children, were taken to the gas chambers immediately after their arrival, without ever setting foot in the prison compound. The extermination of European Jewry and of members of "inferior" races was under way.
>
> Corpses were burned in huge incineration pit because the so-called Old Crematory was unequal to the job. Consequently, the speedy construction of four large gas chambers and crematories was ordered, and on June 28, 1943, Sturmbannführer Bischoff, the chief of

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[24] Broszat in the weekly *Das Parlament* May 8, 1976 (supplement B 19/76), pp. 6-7; idem, *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (No. 2 of 1976), pp. 110-111

[25] Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-248. The only professional historian Butz mentions here, Lucy S. Dawidowicz, is relatively unknown. According to him, she occupies the "Leah Lewis Chair in Holocaust Studies" at the Yeshiva University in New York. Butz does not mention any German historians. Their "accomplishments" are also negligible. See my monograph "Das Institut für Zeitgeschichte-eine Schwindelfirma?" (no. 2 of the series *Zur Aussprache*).

* In the German original, Naumann has *Himmler* attending the Wannsee Conference. This error is corrected in the English-language edition of his book, from which the above passage is taken.— T.F.

> the building section of the Auschwitz Waffen SS, reported that with the last crematory built, the camp had a daily capacity of 4,756 cremations. However, many more could be killed per day: Each of the two larger gas chambers could accommodate up to 3,000 persons. Thus the cremation of bodies under the open sky continued, and the human fat served as supplementary fuel. The stench of burning flesh blanketed the countryside for miles around; dark, fatty smoke wafted across the sky.
>
> But murder in Auschwitz was committed in a variety of ways. Inmates were given injections of phenolic acid, beaten and tortured, arbitrarily and summarily executed, and made guinea-pigs in so-called medical experiments. Inhuman working conditions, unspeakably primitive sanitary conditions, inadequate diet, and the complete degradation of the individual all contributed their share: Debility, disease, and despair took the lives of tens of thousands. The life expectancy of an Auschwitz inmate was but a few weeks.
>
> Also part of the Auschwitz camp complex were a number of subsidiary slave labour camps (primarily Monowitz —Auschwitz III— where IG Farben constructed a Buna [synthetic rubber] camp, which, however, never got around to producing rubber), and about thirty industrial enterprises. There, too —that is, right under the noses of the civilian supervisors of these war plants— feeble and sick prisoners were selected for the gas chambers.
>
> In autumn, 1944, the end of Auschwitz seemed to be approaching. A special prisoner detail assigned to work in the crematories managed to destroy Crematory IV. This rebellion was put down brutally. Almost all involved were shot; a few managed to escape. After this, the crematories were in operation for only a few more weeks; in early November gassings were stopped on orders from above; the murder machinery was grinding to a halt. The gas chambers were blown up and documents destroyed. On January 17, 1945, the evacuation of the camp began. Ten days later, Soviet troops entered Auschwitz; 5,000 sick prisoners, left behind by the retreating Nazis, were saved.
>
> Five thousand —out of more than 400,000 officially registered Auschwitz prisoners: two-thirds men, one-third women. Of these, 261,000 died in the camp or were murdered; the number of those who died during the "evacuation march" is [13] not known. Neither is the number of those who died without ever being registered, who went from railroad siding to gas chamber without stopping over at the camp. Auschwitz Commandant Höss testified at Nuremberg on April 15, 1946, that the number was 2.5 million; he said, though, that this figure was not based on his personal knowledge but was one mentioned by Eichmann. In his memoirs he maintained that the figure he had given was much too high. Eichmann himself, who is believed to have known the actual number kept silent on this point during his Jerusalem trial.
>
> Pery Broad (one of the defendants at Frankfurt), in a report written by him at the end of the war, spoke of 1 to 2 million. The estimates of historians range from 1 to 4 million.[26]

Here I must forgo point by point discussion of Naumann's various claims, many of which strike one as implausible even at first glance. So far as they have anything to do with the alleged mass extermination of Jews at Auschwitz, they will be examined later in the proper place, together with the evidence adduced to support them. However, I must note that in the literature on Auschwitz there is no unanimity about the details the authors use to give an impression of punctilious accuracy. Also, I should perhaps note that it is a well-known fact that *Himmler* * was not present at the "Wannsee Conference" which, according to the so-called Wannsee Protocol, was held under the chairmanship of Reinhard Heydrich.[27]

Since the proper, if not exclusive, subject of our inquiry is the allegation that Auschwitz was an extermination camp set up as part of a scheme to destroy the Jewish people, certain inaccuracies in the passage quoted above,

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[26] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

[27] At least according to the alleged "minutes" of the Wannsee Conference, reproduced as Appendix 1 of the present work. Recently it has been contended that Heydrich could not have been in Berlin on January 20, 1942, the date of the alleged Wannsee Conference. On that very day, he is supposed to have been occupied with various governmental business in Prague. See Wolf-Dieter Rothe, *Die Endlösung der Juden frage*, pp. 180ff.

and others like them, may be ignored. Only those allegations which give the extermination thesis —what we have called the Auschwitz Myth— a semblance of credibility come within the purview of this work. Above all, this study is concerned with the allegation that "gas chambers" purportedly the means whereby thousands of people were exterminated all at once and in a short time, existed at Auschwitz. That allegation, the focal point of the depiction of Auschwitz found in the concentration camp literature and transmitted to the general public by the mass media, is the *sine qua non* of the Auschwitz Myth.

The other causes of inmate mortality Naumann mentions —phenolic acid injections, beatings and torture, arbitrary and summary executions, medical experiments, inhuman working conditions and primitive sanitary conditions— could hardly have been the vehicle for the extermination of all Jews in German-controlled territory. We may leave aside the question of whether tens of thousands of Jews were in fact killed by these means, as Naumann claims. That allegation has no direct bearing on the real subject of our investigation, viz., the charge that millions of Jews fell victim to a systematic, racially motivated program of "genocide." Nevertheless, I believe a few comments about these other alleged causes of death are in order:

Phenolic acid injections. If the lives of inmates were indeed ter[14]minated by means of phenol injections, this action would seem to come under the heading of euthanasia rather than "genocide." Whether euthanasia is ever justifiable, for example, during a life and death struggle such as the Second World War, may be disputed.[28] On this matter the testimony of the Auschwitz Trial defendant Josef Klehr is very much to the point. Among other things, Klehr stated that inmates singled out for the "knock off shot" ("Abspritzung") were not merely ill, but already half-dead.[29] The employment of this method of killing would seem, by the way, to speak against the existence of "gas chambers:" Why were the terminally ill not simply "gassed" along with the rest?

Arbitrary and summary executions. During the Second World War, summary executions —with or without court-martial sentences— were hardly uncommon, and in some cases may have been "arbitrary." In the occupied eastern territories, for example, the German armed forces sometimes resorted to the firing-squad as a means of combatting the plague of guerrilla warfare. Our enemies were no less gun-shy, even after the armistice, as many Germans who lived through the invasion and occupation of our country can testify firsthand. If summary executions did occur at Auschwitz, one could not say that they were all "arbitrary" without examining each and every case. But how is the allegation that summary executions were carried out at Auschwitz directly relevant to the extermination claim?

Beatings and torture. Physical brutality against prisoners, especially resulting in death, obviously deserves the strongest condemnation. If Auschwitz camp personnel beat or otherwise tortured inmates, they were acting in

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[28] Scheidl treats this question in detail in *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. III, pp. 227ff.

[29] Naumann, *Auschwitz*, pp. 82-91 (especially p. 90); Herman Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß. Eine Dokumentation*, vol. II, p. 711. Even several contributions to the Anthologie published by the International Auschwitz Committee, Warsaw, a propaganda work completely without scholarly value, refer to this. See, for example, vol. I, Part 1, pp. 3ff. and 38ff. of that work (cited hereafter as *Polish Anthology*).

violation of Himmler's strict guidelines for treatment of prisoners, and subject to punishment.[30] Indeed, Himmler ordered camp commandants and physicians to give top priority to the preservation of inmates' health and fitness for work.[31] It should not be forgotten that SS tribunals did in fact rigorously prosecute SS men for maltreating inmates. At the Nuremberg IMT trial, SS Justice Konrad Morgen testified that SS tribunals convicted some 200 persons —among them five camp commandants— of such offenses, and that the sentences were usually carried out. Two camp commandants went before the firing-squad.[32]

Medical experiments. To be sure, experimentation on living human beings is a grisly business, but, like experimentation on animals, it is sometimes indispensable to medical research. Any experimentation in the concentration camps could be undertaken only by special permission of Himmler.[33] Incidentally, the medical experiments performed in American penal institutions today —and not just on death-row prisoners— require no top-level governmental authorization.[34]

Inhuman working conditions and primitive sanitary conditions. Naumann's claim that living conditions at Auschwitz were in

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[30] See Reimund Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral: Eine Documentation über die SS*, p. 202. See also IMT, vol. XLII, pp. 517ff. (Gerlach affidavit) and IMT, vol. XLII, pp. 551ff., 522ff. (Morgen affidavit). Corporal punishment could be administered only with the authorization of the Camp Inspector or the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office, Bureau D, and then only under medical supervision. See Schnabel, *op. cit*., pp. 191-194, and Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. III, pp. 53ff.

[31] There are a multitude of documents concerning this. See, for example, the directive from the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office, dated December 28, 1942 (Schnabel, op. cit, p. 223). A particularly lengthy and minutely detailed order from Reichsführer-SS Himmler to all camp commandants, dated October 26, 1943 (signed by SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl, Chief of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office), was recently published in the *Deutsche National Zeitung*, August 12, 1977 (No. 33), p. 1.

[32] IMT, vol. XX, p. 533. See also IMT, vol. XLII, p. 556 (Morgen affidavit), and Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. III, p. 56.

[33] Schnabel, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-272 (sterilization experiments), pp. 289-290 (sub-zero temperature experiments); and *Polish Anthology*, vol, I, Part 1, pp,. 170ff.

Whenever possible, condemned criminals were selected for such experiments. See Alexander Mitscherlich, *Medizin ohne Menschlichkeit*; pp. 24 and 128f.; also *Polish Anthology*, vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 60ff.

Scheidl points out that medical experimentation in the various camps had nothing to do with the alleged extermination of the Jews. It was conducted according to governmental regulations and required official permission. The results of the experiments were regularly published in the journal *Zeitschrift für die gesamte experimentelle Medizin*. See Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. III, pp. 179ff.

The medical experiments mentioned in the Polish Anthology are largely a matter of pure atrocity propaganda, and the only supporting evidence adduced for them is the verdict of the American Military Tribunal in the Nuremberg "Doctors Trial.» Especially typical is the atrocity story told about the Auschwitz camp pharmacist (*Polish Anthology*, vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 162-63), which was rehashed in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial of 1963-65 (see Naumann, *op. cit*., p. 82). Even the more detailed accounts in the *Polish Anthology* (*e.g.* vol. 1, Part 2 and vol. II, Part 1) are, it is obvious, largely repetition of camp gossip or atrocity propaganda. Significantly, the concentration camp registration numbers of the various authors of these tales are very low, which, along with their stories themselves, allows us to conclude that they spent many years in the Auschwitz camp. Elsewhere in the Polish anthology (vol. II, Part 1, p. 7) it is asserted that the life-span of an Auschwitz prisoner usually did not exceed a few months.

[34] According to a report broadcast by the Norddeutscher Rundfunk, Hamburg, UKW2, on March 26, 1974, about 7:45 a.m. See also Heinz Roth, *Was geschah nach 1945?,* Part 2, p. 40; Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. III, pp. 219ff. (especially pp. 223-226); and Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung, May 31, 1974, p. 7.

themselves homicidal remains to be proved. At times, conditions there [15] might have been deadly, especially when epidemics were rampant. In his booklet *Die Auschwitz-Lüge* [The Auschwitz Lie], Thies Christophersen gives convincing testimony that as late as 1944, the fifth year of the war, living and working conditions at Auschwitz were, in general, tolerable; in part, even good.[35] (On my visits to the Auschwitz parent camp in the middle of 1944, I never encountered a malnourished inmate.) Likewise, Naumann's claim that the life expectancy of an Auschwitz inmate did not exceed a few weeks from the time of his arrival is obviously nothing but speculation. Here one recalls that a number of now prominent Jews lived and worked for years at Auschwitz, for example, the Austrian Jew Benedikt Kautsky (a prominent socialist) and the German Jew Erik Blumenfeld (Party Chairman of the Hamburg branch of the "conservative" Christian Democratic Union). According to former Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, "tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands" of onetime Auschwitz inmates are alive today in Israel alone.[36]

Even these few brief factual observations should take away some of the drama from Naumann's portrayal of Auschwitz. Anyway, it is not such incidental atrocity charges as these that have over the past three decades transformed the word "Auschwitz" into a synonym for Hell on earth, but the "gas chamber" charge. Our primary task, then, is to scrutinize the evidence adduced for that charge and determine whether there is any substance to it.

To be sure, a number of facts are already known that would warrant skepticism about the allegation that "gas chambers" existed at Auschwitz.[37] They are not, however, officially acknowledged, much less communicated to the public. The standard treatment of this subject is to assert that the "gassing of the Jews" is an "established historical fact" what is known in legal parlance as a matter of "common knowledge" i.e., something regarded as so obvious that it does not require proof. Thus Hermann Langbein, for example, in his book *...wir haben es getan* [We Did It], makes the claim that "scholars" have proved the leadership of the Third Reich ordered the planning and execution of mass murder. To be precise, he says:

> Perhaps the evidence accessible to research and examination might leave some doubt about this or that detail, but not about the vast killing action itself, ordered and organized by the State. To scholars the facts are clear. In the area of public opinion, however, political passions and guilty conscience distort the picture.[38]

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[35] See also the statements of Dr. Konrad Morgen and Rudolf Höss in the Nuremberg IMT trial. IMT, vol. XX, pp. 534-535 and IMT, vol. XI, pp. 445-447.

[36] Interview published in the newsweekly *Der Spiegel*, as cited by J.G. Burg in *Sündenbäcke*, p. 231, and by Roth in *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher?*, p. 118.

[37] An important piece of circumstantial evidence that there were no "gas chambers" in the Auschwitz complex is the report of a Red Cross delegation that visited Auschwitz in September 1944, and found nothing whatever to substantiate this rumour, which had already reached the International Red Cross. See the collection of documents that organization published after the war: *Documents sur l'activité du CICR en faveur des civils détenus dans les camps de concentration en Allemagne (1939-1945)*, Geneva, 1947 (henceforth referred to as Red Cross). It is cited here after the German translation published in 1974 by the Arolsen Tracing Service, *Die Tätigkeit des IKRK zu gunsten der in den deutschen Konzentrationslagern inhaftierten Zivilpersonen (1939-1945)*. See my commentary on this document in *Mensch und Maß* (No. 22 of 1975), pp. 1021-1031; also Harwood, *Six Million?*, 24-26. In this context, Butz's investigation of the fate of the Hungarian Jews is likewise important: *op. cit.*, pp. 133ff.

[38] Hermann Langbein, *...wir haben es getan: Selbstzeugnisse in Tagebüchern und Briefen*, p. 8.

While we need not allow ourselves to be spoon fed such arrogant generalities, *we* are not, as a basic principle, the ones who have to come up with the evidence here. Anybody who implies that we are is turning things upside down. The burden of proof, to use a juristic term, rests solely with those groups which, aided by virtually the entire mass media and even part of "German" officialdom, including the judiciary, have for more than thirty years stridently and doggedly accused Germany of having committed "genocide" against the Jewish people.
[16]

In the field of historical scholarship there is, strictly speaking, no burden of proof in the juristic sense. However, before the historian can approach his task of depicting some past epoch or event through critical interpretation of the source material he has researched, he must determine the reliability of those sources, something "establishment" historians have not, as I see it, so much as attempted to do with regard to the subject under discussion here. Every conscientious historian will reject a source when he has reason to suspect that it may be false or even unreliable, and, accordingly, eliminate from his work any statements based thereupon, just as a court of law will dismiss a case on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Our attempt to scrutinize the evidence for the "gassing of the Jews" allegation is a preview of the kind of research future historians will have to undertake on a broader scale.

Since the "gas chamber" allegation has been used to represent Germany as a nation of criminals, I find it quite appropriate to introduce the burden of proof concept into the dispute over the extermination thesis. The criteria of penal law may be readily applied to the wholesale indictment of the German people. In the penal jurisprudence of every Western nation it is an established principle that the accused must be proved guilty. If his guilt cannot be proved, he is to be regarded and treated as innocent. According to the time-honored principle of Roman law *in dubio pro reo*, he must be acquitted when the facts of the case leave room for doubt, even though his innocence cannot be definitely established. The German people have every right to expect this standard to be applied to them in the court of world history.

Thus we the accused —the German people— are under no obligation to prove that "gas chambers" did not exist. Rather, it is up to our accusers to prove that they did. As will be seen in the following chapters, they have yet to do so, and we must not allow ourselves to be fooled by any claims to the contrary, such as those of Langbein. So long as the Auschwitz mythologists make this charge, they will be responsible for proving it. We do not have to plead guilty to a mere accusation. It is to be hoped that this point will not be lost on some otherwise well-meaning and patriotic journalists who use the word "Auschwitz" as a synonym for "genocide" because —as one of them stated in response to a question of mine— "the opposite cannot be proved."

Foundations of the "Official" Auschwitz Image

Documentary Evidence

As source material for historiography, documents of every kind are assigned pre-eminent rank. Generally speaking, documents constitute the

soundest basis for the portrayal of historical events and the analysis of historical processes. While the term "document" in the broadest [17] sense, may be used to describe almost any object conveying information, for example, maps, blueprints, sketches, photographs, motion pictures, and so forth, in the narrower sense it refers only to original or official statements in writing. Transcripts of witness testimony, affidavits, memoirs, letters, and the like are all examples of documents in this limited sense of the word.[39]

Documents that originated in connection with the alleged events, to which the general term "contemporaneous documents" has been applied, will naturally be assigned greater importance in our study than the post-war testimony and personal accounts the Auschwitz mythologists use to support their grave charges. The latter came into being in what Dr. Butz has called a "hysterical emotional atmosphere."[40] Indeed, the testimony and affidavits in the Nuremberg and other "war crimes" trials were often given under duress. Contemporaneous documents, particularly those which are said to have played an indispensable role in the alleged events, represent the most reliable source of information about what actually happened.

According to our ground rules, only contemporaneous documents will count as documentary evidence. To be specific: written statements, both personal and official, but especially the latter, relating to "extermination actions"; construction plans of installations necessary for the operation of an "extermination camp" (e.g., "gas chambers" and crematoria); purported photographs of such installations and actions; and any surviving objects that convey information about the alleged events.

At the outset, we should make a few general comments about the authenticity of the documents that allegedly come from German official files. It is —or should be— well known that America has thus far returned to Germany only selected portions of the tons and tons of documents it confiscated from German archives.[41] (By "Germany" I mean the Federal Republic of Germany: I do not know whether the German Democratic Republic has received any confiscated documents from the Soviet Union or another of its allies. That is most unlikely.) Official documents relating to what happened in the concentration camps were assembled and evaluated in connection with the various "war crimes trials" staged by the victorious Allies, especially the Nuremberg trials, which were largely an American production. There they received the number and letter designations by which they are cited in the standard works on our subject, seldom with any indication of where the originals are to be found. At best, one finds a footnote indicating that a photocopy of this or that document is to be found at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte or in some other archive. Very often, however, it is not even a photocopy of the original, but rather a photocopy of a "transcription of the original made by the Allies." Nobody seems to know where the originals of the "Nuremberg Documents" —as they are called— repose today. Evidently, [18] "scholars" and "professional historians" have not taken the trouble to locate

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[39] *Der Grosse Brockhaus*, vol. III (1957), p. 304, "Dokument"; ibid., vol. XII (1957), p. 26, "Urkunde."

[40] Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

[41] On this see Werner Maser, *Nürnberg. Tribunal der Sieger*, pp. 163ff., 173-174, also notes 20 (p. 633) and 23 (p. 634).

the originals of these documents. (When I tried to locate the so-called Wannsee Protocol, which is constantly represented as the key document on the "extermination of the Jews" I had no success whatsoever.) It is doubtful, by the way, that an independent expert has ever examined a single "Nuremberg Document" for its authenticity. The documents are, as Udo Walendy puts it, "nearly inaccessible."[42]

Given these facts —particularly the fact that they have not been evaluated by independent experts, indeed, cannot be— one must have grave doubts as to the authenticity of all "German official documents" cited in the literature on our subject. It is hardly surprising that such authentication was not undertaken in connection with the Nuremberg trials. For the sake of argument, however, we shall proceed on the premise that they are genuine. When doubt as to their authenticity may be surmised from their origin and variance from known fact, it will be indicated in the proper place.

Readers interested in probing further into this episode in recent history will find most of the documents used at the Nuremberg IMT trial in the 42-volume published record of those proceedings, which may be found in all the larger libraries. Particular documents are not always easy to locate in the trial record, since the individual volumes lack tables of contents and the general indexing is incomplete. However, page and volume numbers are usually cited correctly in the literature on our subject. It is more difficult to obtain the text of documents used in the subsequent "war crimes trials."[43] There is, of course, an official compendium, as it were, of the documents used in the Nuremberg NMT* proceedings, the 15-volume *Trials of War Criminals*, but it contains only English translations which, according to Dr. Butz, cannot always be trusted. As even Reitlinger admits, neither there nor anywhere else are these documents systematically collected and reproduced in full. Nevertheless, we may be sure that all the fundamental documents on the "Final Solution" are to be found in the German-language literature on the subject. They will be the starting-point of our investigation. This approach does not strike me as objectionable, since the task we have set for ourselves is not to determine what Auschwitz was "really" like, but simply to investigate whether sufficient documentary evidence can be adduced for the claim that Jews were exterminated *en masse* at the camp. We may assume that our "contemporary historians" have left no stone unturned in their search for evidence to support even the least of their

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[42] On this see Udo Walendy, *Die Methoden der Unterziehung*, pp. 34ff. The statement of the Director of the Staatsarchiv (Regional Archives) at Nuremberg, quoted by Walendy, that for over 30 years "scholars of many lands have seen no reason to consult original documents that are not readily accessible" is noteworthy indeed (Walendy, *ibid.*, p. 36, tight colunm). I had similar experiences when attempting to locate various documents in the Staatsarchiv at Nuremberg and the Bundesarchiv (German Federal Archives) at Coblenz. When it comes to researching the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question," it seems that "scholars" are satisfied with quite threadbare source material. This example alone should make it clear that nearly all previous studies in this field are suspect. The New York Jewish newspaper *Aufbau*, june 23, 1978, published a report on an exhibit of "Holocaust documents" at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. According to *Aufbau*, similar exhibits are planned for German schools and universities. To me it seems doubtful that original documents of genuine importance would really be exhibited. The exhibits in Germany will tell.

[43] On this see Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 611-615; Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

* Nurenberg Military Tribunal, a series of twelve trials of "lesser" German defendants, conducted entirely by the Americans — T.F.

allegations. Almost invariably they make use of the same documents that were used in the Nuremberg trials, often giving only excerpts from them.

Now, let us assume for a moment that the leadership of the Third Reich actually decided to "exterminate the Jews of Europe." (Ever since the war, the anti-German propagandists who claim such a policy existed [19] have equated it with the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" a term which, as we shall see, was used with a quite different meaning during the Third Reich.) The formulation and carrying out of a program of mass extermination would have involved so much planning and preparation, so many governmental officials and agencies, that one would expect it to have produced a corresponding mass of paperwork. But where are these contemporaneous documents? In his introduction to the purported autobiography of the former Auschwitz camp commandant Rudolf Höss, Dr. Martin Broszat, one of the "expert witnesses" in the so-called Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial and currently director of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, talks as though the Auschwitz legend had long since been substantiated with reliable documents. "Documents on Auschwitz are nothing new" he asserts. One wonders to what extent he understands the meaning of the term "document." From the context in which this remark appears, one must assume that he regards all the post-war testimony and reports on Auschwitz as "documents." However, as we shall see, genuine contemporaneous documents that can in any way be construed as supporting the allegation that Jews were "exterminated" at Auschwitz-Birkenau are almost non-existent.

The explanation usually adduced for this dearth of contemporaneous documents is that the Reich leadership kept its homicidal plans under tight security. All the necessary orders and directives were, it is claimed, given orally. Since it has never been proved that Hitler or any other top Reich official issued a written order for the extermination of all Jews in German-controlled territory, the Institut für Zeitgeschichte is reduced to claiming that "according to many witnesses, it must have been given orally."[44]] The same claim appears in the depositions leading members of this institute gave as "expert witnesses" in the Auschwitz Trial, and the arguments they use to support it are thoroughly unconvincing. One of these "experts" Dr. Helmut Krausnick, cites in this regard the memoirs of Himmler's masseur Felix Kersten, which have since been branded a forgery (Since a number of respected historians hold the view that the Kersten memoirs are fraudulent, it cannot be simply dismissed).[45] Another

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[44] Letter from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, cited after Heinz Roth, *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher?*, p. 115

[45] Particularly David Irving. See his *Hitler's War*, p. xx; also the review thereof in *Nation Europa* (No. 8 of 1975), p. 62. After the war, Kersten had every reason to "rehabilitate" himself on account of bis close relations with Heinrich Himmler. Not until 1952 did he publish extracts from the diary he purportedly kept. They appeared under the title *Totenkopf und Treue* and are most commonly cited after the English language version (*The Kersten Memoirs*, London, 1956). According to Kersten's own foreword, the text of *The Kersten Memoirs* does not always correspond to that of *Totenkopf und Treue*, nor to the excerpts from his diary that were published in Dutch and Swedish: material was added to, and omitted from, those volumes. Kersten claims that whatever he knows about the "extermination of the jews" came directly from Himmler —indeed, as early as November 11, 1941! (*Totenkopf und Treue*, p. 149; *The Kersten Memoirs*, p. 119). Of course, it is rather unlikely that Himmler would have discussed at length with his masseur a policy that was allegedly subject to such secrecy that the decisive orders were only transmitted orally. In *Der stille Befehl. Medizinrat Kersten, Himmler und das Dritte Reich*, p. 63, Achim Besgen reveals yet another particular from the alleged Kersten Diary, which the aforementioned volumes lack. According to this story, Kersten received detafied information about the "extermination of Jews" in

of Krausnick's arguments in support of this assertion is that the *Einsatzgruppen* (SS commandos) took Hitler's so-called Commissar Order as a license to kill every Jew they could in their field of operations.[46] Be that as it may, the occurrence of such actions would not *per se* prove that Hitler or Himmler ordered the liquidation of those Jews. Testimony to that effect from the Nuremberg trials carries no weight here, since there are so many examples of that testimony being extorted through physical and psychological torture or bought with promises.[47] Obviously, the claim that the Commissar Order included a directive to exterminate all Jews but that this part of the order was never put in writing is pure speculation. Even such a hardly impartial biographer of Hitler as Joachim C. Fest must admit that "in the table [20] talk, the speeches, the documents or the recollections of participants from all those years not a single concrete reference of his to the practice of annihilation has come down to us."[48]

Also opposing the hypothesis that Hitler or Himmler issued an oral directive for the extermination of the Jews is the fact that no request for confirmation of such an order has been found among the files of any subordinate agency. Given the famous German penchant for thoroughness and the gravity of the alleged order, one would assume that those involved in carrying it out would, if only for their own protection, have requested

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"death camps" from an - unnamed - SS-Obersturmbannführer who sat next to him in the mess hall during lunch. This tale is patently unbelievable.

[46] As Hans-Adolf Jacobsen in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. II, pp. 163ff., and Reitfinger, *op. cit.*, p. 91, have also asserted.

Krausnick himself cites a "written minute," dated July 2, 1941, in which Heydrich is reported to have "summarized" to the four Senior SS and Police Commanders «basic instructions» he had already issued to the *Einsatzgruppen*.- According to this «minute,» Heydrich ordered the *Einsatzgruppen* to "execute" only those Jews who occupied positions in the Soviet state or the Communist Party, in addition to non-Jewish Soviet commissars, Party functionaries, and sundry other "extremists» -"saboteurs, propagandists, snipers, assassins, agitators, etc." (*Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. II, p. 364). Nevertheless, Krausnick asserts that 'there can be no doubt that... the *Einsatzgruppen* had verbal orders to shoot all Jews" (*ibid.*, p. 365). As is well known, the task of the *Einsatzgruppen* was to carry on a ruthless struggle against the guerrilla bands operating behind German lines. Since the Jews were naturally on the side of the guerrillas, many of them —including some who were innocent of terrorist activities - may have been executed for that reason, but such executions had nothing to do with "genocide." See Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. V, pp. 64ff.; Harwood, pp. llff.; Walendy, *Europa in Flammen*, vol. II, pp. 389ff.; also Rudolf Aschenauer, *NS-Prozesse im Lichte der Zeitgeschichte*, passim.

For the rest, we need not take into account the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen*, even though they have been linked from the start to the "final Solution," since they had nothing to do with Auschwitz.

[47] See Chapter Three, pp. 109, 122-47, of the present work. The suffragan bishop of Munich, Johannes Neuhäusler, a former Dachau inmate, made some remarkable comments on this question in an interview he granted to Radio Munich in 1948. Significantly, this interview was never broadcast. A transcript of it was first published in the January 6, 1974 issue of the *Münchner Katholishce Kirchenzeitung*. The *Frankfurter Rundschau* of January 4, 1974 also carried a report about it. See further Maurice Bardeche, *Nürnberg, oder Die Falschmünzer*, pp. 14-16, 86-130; Freda Utley, pp. 185ff., 21lff.; *op cit.*, Harwood, pp. 10-13; Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 160ff; Heinz Roth, *Was geschah nach 1945?*, Part 2, pp. 63f., 67ff., 84, 95ff. Another very revealing disclosure about the methods of interrogation then being practiced is the statement of Jost Walter Schneider, a German whom the U.S. War Crimes Group employed as an interpreter, quoted by the attorney Eberhard Engelhardt in his contribution to *Sieger-Tribunal: Nürnberg 1945-46* (a collection of scholarly papers delivered at the Contemporary History Congress of the Gesellschaft für Freie Publizistik in Kassel, May 21-23, 1976, published as the July-August 1976 issue of *Nation Europa*), pp. 65-68.

[48] Joachim C. Fest, *Hitler: Eine Biographie*, p. 931.

confirmation. At the very least, one would expect some traces of such requests to have survived. This is especially true if Robert M.W. Kempner is correct in his charge that countless officials and agencies of the Reich Government were not only aware of the "extermination of the Jews" but even took part in it.[49] There can be hardly any doubt that the Allies went through the documents they confiscated with a fine-toothed comb to find such evidence. Since no document containing a reference to an "extermination order" has yet been discovered, it is highly improbable that the order was given. If massacres of Jews did occur, by means of gas or whatnot, subordinates acting on their own undertook them. Such killings would therefore have nothing to do with any "plan" to exterminate the Jewish people. No wonder the extermination mythologists doggedly insist —despite a total lack of evidence— that Hitler *must have* given the order for the "extermination of the Jews" orally. Of course, this "must have" is no substitute for proof.

In this connection, an order Himmler allegedly issued in autumn 1944 for the suspension of the "extermination program" is constantly cited in the literature on our subject. From the alleged order, the extermination mythologists conclude that an order for the "extermination of the Jews" must have been issued in the first place. Apart from the fact that this conclusion is something of a *non sequitur*, one notes they usually avoid mentioning that there is no documentary proof that Himmler issued any order to shut down an "extermination program."[50]

Besides the extremely rare contemporaneous documents that bear directly on Auschwitz, there are a number of documents that are supposed to bear indirectly on the alleged plan to exterminate the Jews. They cannot be ignored here, even though they contain no mention whatever of Auschwitz, because they form the basis of the claim that the evacuation (i.e., deportation)

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[49] Kempner's hate-filled "reckoning" with his erstwhile colleagues, *Eichmann und Komplizen*, is almost totally based on this charge. In their book *Das Dritte Reich und seine Diener,* Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf have attempted to document this thesis. They give no specific references and are anything but convincing.

[50] The story of this order from Himmler is worked into the alleged Höss memoir *Kommandant in Auschwitz* (p. 160). Broszat, the editor and commentator, remarks in a footnote that "the fact itself has been confirmed beyond a shadow of doubt by a variety of witnesses." In this context, he invokes Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 516ff., who, in turn, cites the so-called Kasztner Report (Reszö Kasztner, *Bericht des jüdischen Rettungskomitees aus Budapest*, Geneva, 1945), which on this point is based upon a communication that SS-Standartenführer Kurt Becher allegedly sent to Kasztner. As a witness in the Nuremberg Trials, Becher affirmed any statements attributed to him that seemed likely to procure his own acquittal. Afterwards, he was not harassed further. See IMT, vol. XI, p. 370 and vol. XY-XIII, pp. 68-70 (Nuremberg Document 3762-PS, Becher Affidavit). This can hardly be called a "fact confirmed beyond a shadow of doubt by a variety of witnesses." The one-sided presentation in Alexander Weissberg's famous book *Die Geschichte des Joel Brand* likewise rests only upon hearsay. It is notable, however, for the author's admission that there is a complete lack of documentary evidence to prove Hitler planned to exterminate the Jews. As a source material for contemporary historiography, his book is otherwise quite worthless. On Weissberg see the anonymously published *The Myth of the Six Million*, p. 33. For a critical estimate of Kasztner and bis informant Becher see especially Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?,* p. 94 (note 29) and pp. 232ff.

In addition to Kasztner, Reitünger invokes a certain Miklos Nyiszli (*op. cit.*, pp. 517-518), a personage with which we shall deal at greater length elsewhere. He is an even more dubious source of information than the others (see Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?*, pp. 242-245). Harwood, *Six Million?*, p. 20, describes Nyiszli as a "mythical and invented person."

Incidentally, there is also a Nuremberg affidavit from Kasztner: IMT, vol. XXXI, p. 1-15 (document 2605-PS).

of Jews from all parts of Europe to concentration camps in the German-occupied Eastern territories, beginning in 1941 —an indisputable historical occurrence— was undertaken for the purpose of killing them, and that, in particular, Birkenau was the site and "gas chambers" the means of this mass murder.[51] Even these documents, however, are not particularly numerous.

The documents that bear, directly or indirectly, on the question of whether an extermination program was implemented at Auschwitz will be scrutinized in the following chapter.
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Post-War Personal Accounts

Considerably more numerous than contemporaneous documents used to support the Auschwitz legend are the personal accounts of those who purportedly had firsthand experience of the "death factories." In this connection, accounts written by former Auschwitz inmates figure most prominently, but former members of the SS camp personnel have also written accounts or given depositions claiming Jews were exterminated at the camp in "gas chambers" and crematoria built especially for this purpose. Perhaps the most important of the accounts written by former SS men is that of Rudolf Höss, commandant of the Auschwitz camp, which we have mentioned above.

A particularly instructive collection of such accounts is the book *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, edited by the former concentration camp inmates H.G. Adler, Hermann Langbein, and Ella Lingens-Reiner. This compilation has a foreword by Hermann Langbein but is otherwise without commentary. Obviously intended as psychological spadework for the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, which began in 1963 after several years of preliminary investigations, it contains accounts by persons who later appeared as prosecution witnesses, some of whom likewise told their stories on the radio prior to the trial. A similar compendium of personal accounts is Hermann Langbein's *Menschen in Auschwitz*. Unlike the previously mentioned volume, this compilation contains a good deal of augmentation and commentary.

There are other books that deal exclusively with the purported experiences of their authors in Auschwitz, but these two collections, I believe,

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[51] The fact that deported Jews in the occupied eastern territories were extensively used for work essential to the war effort had to be admitted even by the members of the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, who were consulted as "experts" in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. See *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. II, pp. 129-144, 375-379, 395, 426ff. Yet even today the charge persists that the Reich leadership sought to "work the Jews to death." For example, Uwe Dietrich Adam, in his *Judenpolitik im Dritten Reich*, speaks of "elimination through toil," but the only proof he can adduce for this charge is the so-called Wannsee Protocol and a memorandum by Minister of Justice Thierack, in one passage of which the phrase "annihilaation through work» is used (see IMT, vol. XXVI, pp. 200ff., Nuremberg Document 654-PS). This thesis is self-contradictory to the point of absurdity. What farmer slaughters the ox he would have draw the plow?

How very interested the Reich leadership was in the labour of the concentration camp inmates and, consequently, how much attention it devoted to the preservation of their health and energies, is shown by numerous surviving documents on the subject, documents indisputably authentic. With their complaints about inadequate shelter and nourishment for prisoners, about inhumane treatment, they are just as incompatible with this charge as with the one that the Reich leadership, *i.e.*, Hitler or Himmler, planned to kill the greatest possible number of Jews in the concentration camps with the greatest possible speed. See note 31 above. Also Schnabel, *op. cit.*, pp. 204, 207, 210, 215, 216, 221, 227, and 235.

represent the most copious sampling of what has been reported about the "extermination camp."

The evaluation of these "eyewitness accounts" only a very few of which contain anywhere near specific statements about "gassings" or "gas chambers" and crematoria, leads us to the problem of how to regard witness testimony in general. For it must be equally clear to both layman and jurists that not everything witnesses state is the truth. Here we can only touch briefly on this problem. Later on, we shall treat it in greater detail.

It goes without saying that virtually all of these accounts are far removed from objectivity. In the case of accounts written by former inmates that is quite understandable. Nobody likes to be deprived of his freedom. People who have been imprisoned are inclined to speak only evil of their erstwhile jailers. After the fall of the Third Reich, such a depiction was expected, indeed, demanded, of former inmates of its concentration camps and prisons. We must always bear in mind that witnesses in the initial "war crimes trials" —and even later ones— were under pressure to give a certain line of testimony. Few people today can imagine the variety and intensity of the pressures and influences to [22] which those witnesses were subject.[52] Furthermore, we must take into account what Rassinier calls the "Odysseus complex" namely, the psychic tendency, present in most individuals, to exaggerate one's own experiences, whether good or bad.[53] In view of these self-evident facts, less weight should be assigned to post-war accounts than to contemporaneous documents. All post-war accounts must be subjected to particularly rigorous scrutiny.

Even those accounts by writers and witnesses who appear to be making a sincere effort to relate the truth as it is known to them must be regarded with critical reserve. The ability of human beings to observe and record has its limits. Any honest person will affirm this fact from his own experience. What is more, the suggestive effect of the atrocity propaganda spread by the mass media since 1945 has caused even well-intentioned writers of personal accounts to mingle inseparably hearsay and personal experience, or to relate hearsay *as* personal experience. Along with this confounding of fact and fiction goes a certain mutual influence —conscious or unconscious— among former concentration camp inmates.[54]

Thus one must warn against placing any great trust in post-war accounts of Auschwitz. No responsible historian would regard personal accounts alone as proof, least of all of the extermination thesis. Unless they could be verified from authentic sources, he would not even take into consideration as evidence.

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[52] On this consult note 47 above. No doubt the witnesses appearing before German courts in "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials have also been unceasingly manipulated. Hans Laternser has given detailed and cogent proof of that. See his *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 85-124; also my own publication *Die westdeutsche Justiz und die sogenannten NS-Gewaltverbrechen*.

[53] Paul Rassinier, *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, pp. 140-141; idem; *Was nun, Odysseus?*, p. 17. See also Heinz Roth *...der makaberste Betrug aller Zeiten*, p. 38.

[54] Even the Director of the Central Office of the Regional judiciary for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes, Chief Public Prosecutor Adalbert Rückerl, has to concede that. See his *NS-Prozesse*, p. 26. The noted criminologist Hellwig's remarks on the suggestive effects of atrocity propaganda in World War I are no less applicable to the intensified atrocity propaganda during and after World War II. See Albert Heflwig, *Psychologie und Vernehumugstechnik bei Tatbestandsermittlungen* p. 88f. Likewise instructive on this point is Baron Arthur Ponsonby's *Falsehood in Wartime*.

Most "witnesses" to the alleged "gassing of the Jews" have failed, by the way, to provide a convincing explanation of how or why their own lives were spared.

Post-War Legal Proceedings

Since most people place a great deal of trust in judicial decisions, the various post-war trials of so-called "nazi" war criminals played an important role in the establishment and consolidation of the extermination legend. Beginning with the Nuremberg trials of the Allies, judicial and quasi-judicial proceedings have been used to give a semblance of plausibility to the six million legend. All the courts had to do, it seems, was note in their decisions that the "extermination of the Jews" is an "established fact."

Nevertheless, the various "war crimes trials" conducted by the victorious Allies failed to accomplish the purposes for which they were designed. In Germany, as elsewhere, they were unpopular from the start, and their "findings" continue to meet with doubt.[55] That helps explain why the name Auschwitz was virtually unknown to the average citizen until well into the 1950's, even though the International Military Tribunal had represented Auschwitz as the site of millions of murders, largely on the basis of the Höss affidavit, which was undoubtedly the product of coercion.[56]
[23]

After the propaganda campaign to make Auschwitz the focal point of the extermination legend began, it must have seemed advisable to get a German court to echo this allegation. Hence the grotesque proceedings against Mulka *et al*. before the Frankfurt Assize Court, which have entered the history of jurisprudence under the heading of the "Auschwitz Trial." This trial, which received extraordinary attention in the mass media, has influenced the historical consciousness of a great many people, especially in Germany. There can be no doubt that it not only strengthened the belief of those who were already convinced that Auschwitz was the centre of the extermination of the Jews, but also persuaded a wider range of people that there might be some truth to this allegation, even, as mentioned above, elements on the so-called right-wing.

Although the Auschwitz mythologists constantly invoke the various Nuremberg trials, as well as the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, as proof that Auschwitz-Birkenau was a "death factory" they do not merit any special consideration within the framework of this study. The findings of these trials are based on documents and witness testimony found in the literature on the camp, and will be discussed in that context. It goes without saying that a legal proceeding, even one concerned with events in recent history, is only worth as much as the documents and testimony on which its findings are based. As Rassinier has noted, not a single document has been presented, either at the Nuremberg trials or in the concentration camp literature, that substantiates the allegation that "gas chambers" were installed in German concentration camps,

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[55] Maurer in *Mensch und Maß* (No. 16 of 1977), pp. 725ff.; Richard Harwood Nuremberg and Other War Crimes Trials. Particularly thorough criticism from a contemporary viewpoint is contained in the collection *Sieger-Tribunal, Nürnberg 1945-46*, published as the July-August 1976 issue of *Nation Europa*.

[56] On this see pp. 134ff. For a penetrating analysis of the Höss affidavit (Nuremberg Document 3868-PS, IMT vol. XXXIII, pp. 275-279), see Butz, *op. cit*., pp. 103ff.

on orders from the Reich Government, for the purpose of mass extermination of Jews.[57] In this regard, the Auschwitz Trial changed nothing.

Even so, I think it appropriate to devote a chapter to the Auschwitz Trial, because quite a few people believe that its findings have especially great "probative value." I also think this costly trial is the best possible illustration of the fact that penal trials are unsuited for the clarification of historical issues — indeed, that they hinder, rather than promote, the search for historical truth.

[57] Rassinier, *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, p. 20.

Chapter Two

Contemporaneous Documents

As we make a detailed examination of documents of the most diverse kinds from the period of the Third Reich we shall see that the Auschwitz mythologists are able to draw from them the conclusions they desire —if indeed at all— only by resorting to forced logic, conjecture, and the creation of fictive, or at least dubious, associations. That is to say, there are gaps in the chain of "proof" and the individual pieces of circumstantial evidence are far from unambiguous.[58]

Such argumentation is no more acceptable to the historian than it is to the jurist. With reference to the question of whether Hitler "knew" about the "gassing" of the Jews, the distinguished British historian David Irving has stated, in no uncertain terms, that none of the available documents contains any solid information, and historians cannot go by speculation alone.[59]

Only in a very few contemporaneous "eyewitness accounts" is it expressly claimed that "gas chambers" existed at Birkenau. These reports, however, are so questionable and contradictory that after the war one hardly ever dared invoke them as proof, or quoted them only in part.

In the following chapter, I shall deal with the contemporaneous documents according to subject matter as well as importance.

Basic Documents from German Official Records

The "Göring Decree"

In nearly all the historical accounts of the "extermination of the Jews" a directive Reichsmarschall Göring issued to SS-Gruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Security Service and the Secret Police Service, on July 31,

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[58] An instructive example of this method of writing history has been given us by Professor Walter Hofer with his book *Der Nationalsozialismus-Dokumente 1933-1945*, which was promoted to bestseller status. The title masquerades as a collection of authentic documents, though this is not the ease. Besides the appendix, which contains selected documents of little informative value, the book contains an extensive text which makes the case desired by the re-educators. The impression is clearly created that the argument of the text has been proven beyond doubt by the documents, of which some are cited only in excerpts. Aside from the fact that some of the documents must be designated as inauthentic or forged, the critical reader will be able to recognize that even those which are genuine do not establish Hofer's case. In regard to the various facts of the Auschwitz legend, Butz points out that these facts leave room for a dual interpretation. He states that it was a necessity for the creators of the legend to incorporate such ambiguous facts into their history of annihilation, because a hoax of this dimension, if it is to be believable at all, can not be false in every particular. This kind of proof of course is not always convincing- in any case not on its own.

[59] See Irving, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-271.

1941, is cited as a fundamental document. It supposedly aims at consolidating and co-ordinating "extermination actions" planned earlier and already partially executed. As executed. As a [26] rule, the great "extermination action" that allegedly culminated in the Auschwitz "death camp" is dated from the time of this "decree." The document, placed in evidence at the Nuremberg IMT trial (Nuremberg Document 710-PS), reads as follows:

> Der Reichsmarschall des GrossdeutscheSS
> Reiches
> Beauftragter für den Vierjahresplan Vorsitzender
> des Ministerrats für die Reichsverteidigung
> An den
> Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD
> SS-Gruppenführer Heydrich
>
> Berlin, den 31.7.1941 [TB]
>
> In Ergänzung der Ihnen bereits mit Erlass vom 24.1.39 übertragenen Aufgabe, die Judenfrage in Form der Auswanderung oder Evakuierung einer den Zeitverhältnissen entsprechend möglichst günstigen Lösung zuzuführen, beauftrage ich Sie hiermit, alle erforderlichen Vorbereitungen in organisatorischer, sachlicher und materieller Hinsicht zu treffen für eine Gesamtlösung der Judenfrage im deutschen Einflussgebiet in Europa.
>
> Soferne hierbei die Zuständigkeiten anderer Zentralinstanzen berührt werden, sind diese zu beteiligen.
>
> Ich beauftrage Sie weiter, mir in Bälde einen Gesamtentwurf über die organisatorischen, sachlichen und materiellen Vorausmassnahmen zur Durchführung der angestrebten Endlösung der Judenfrage vorzulegen.
>
> Göring
>
> Supplementary to the task that was entrusted to you in the decree dated 24 January 1939, namely to solve the Jewish question by emigration and evacuation in a way which is most favourable in connection with the conditions prevailing at the time, I herewith commission you to carry out all preparations with regard to organizational, factual, and financial viewpoints for a total solution of the Jewish question in those territories in Europe under German influence.
>
> If the competency of other central organizations is touched in this connection, these organizations are to participate.
>
> I further commission you to submit to me as soon as possible a comprehensive proposal showing the organizational, factual, and material measures already taken for the intended final solution of the Jewish question.[60]

For the glib Nuremberg prosecutor Robert M.W. Kempner it was a foregone conclusion that: "Thereby Heydrich and his henchmen were officially entrusted with the administration of murder."[61]

To the unbiased reader of the document this remark is simply astonishing. Nothing in the "Göring Decree" has any direct bearing on a "murder plan." From the wording it is obvious that this order concerns measures for evacuating or promoting the emigration of Jews out of the German sphere of influence in Europe, not physically exterminating them. The document takes on the latter meaning only when the expression "final solution" is given the forced interpretation treatment, as almost invariably

[60] Nuremberg document NG-2586/PS-710 (compare IMT vol. IX, pp. 575ff. and vol. XXVI, pp. 266-267). The document is quoted here according to Krausnick's expert testimony in the Auschwitz trial (*Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 11, p. 372). In Reimund Schnabel's document collection, *Macht ohne Moral*, this decree is printed as Document 175, (p. 496); there, however, it bears the date "8.7.1941." The date "31.7.1941" is in accord with the statements in the IMT proceedings.

[61] Kempner, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

happens.[62] To give but an one example, Andreas Hillgruber, in his essay "Die Endlösung und das deutsche Ostimperium" [27] ("The Final Solution and the German Eastern Imperium"), published in the Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte in 1972, goes so far as to designates the "Final Solution" by which he means, of course, the "extermination of Jews" as the cornerstone of the racial-ideological program of National Socialism.[63] None of those who attribute this meaning to "Final Solution" have taken the trouble to ascertain when, where, and, most importantly, by whom it was attached to the term. In the literature on our topic, Heydrich's long involvement with organizing the emigration of Jews from Reich territory (a project for which the agency headed by SS-Obersturmbannführer Eichmann, Bureau IV B 4 of the Reich Security Main Office [RSHA], had primary responsibility), is conveniently viewed as preparation for his later assignment of "exterminating the Jews."[64] Any other possible correlations between the "Göring Decree" and Heydrich's previous tasks are studiously ignored. Sometimes it is even claimed that the "Final Solution" went back to an order Hitler gave Himmler, and was already in progress. According to this theory, the "Göring Decree" was a "mere formality" simply granting Heydrich the authority to "engage other State agencies" in the "Final Solution."[65]

Here we have quite a good example of the reckless speculation that attends so many discussions of this subject. An "order" Hitler may never have given —that he did so has yet to be proved— is combined with the arbitrary definition of the term "final solution" to create the impression that Göring's rather commonplace directive is evidence of a scheme to murder the Jews. How Göring, in particular, came to transmit to *Heydrich* an order *Hitler* supposedly gave *Himmler* (Heydrich's immediate superior), providing to some extent the *modus operandi* for its execution, is a secret known only to these artificers of explication.

Evidently Robert H. Jackson, the American Chief Prosecutor at the Nuremberg IMT trial, was not quite satisfied with the document in its original form. At any rate, he introduced a retroversion of the English translation that had already been submitted by the prosecution in which, among other things, the term "total solution" ("Gesamtlösung"), in the first paragraph of the original text, was changed to "final solution" ("Endlösung"), presumably so that the document would fit in better with the charges in the indictment. Göring energetically and successfully contested this attempt at falsification.[66] Ever since, only the text of the "decree" he acknowledged (the version that appears above) has been cited.

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[62] See for example Kempner, *ibid.*, p. 5; Scheffler, *Judenverfolgung im Dritten Reich*, p. 36; Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, pp. 112ff. Naturally the term "Endlösung" was also used in this sense in Attorney General Hausner's bill of indictment in the Jerusalem Eichmann trial (Servatius, *Adolf Eichmann*, p. 7); the court followed this concept in this trial. There has never been a single court proceeding during the post-war period, neither in foreign, nor in German courts, in which the concept of the Final Solution hasn't been understood in this sense from the outset, without any further investigation.

[63] Hillgruber, *op. cit.*, pp. 133ff.

[64] See for example Reinhard Henkys, *Die nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen*, p. 127

[65] Buchheim in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 1, p. 81; Krausnick, vol. II, p. 372. Also Adler, *Der verwaltete Mensch*, pp. 84ff.

[66] IMT, vol. IX, p. 575. The exchange between Göring and Jackson can also be found in Härtle: *Freispruch für Deutschland*, pp. 170ff.

The real reason for the issuing of this directive is to be found, simply and indubitably, in the first sentence, where it is stated that the Reich Government's policy of deporting or promoting the emigration of Jews, which until then directly involved only Jews in Germany, would be extended to include all Jews residing in the German sphere of influence. Considering that the German sphere of influence had recently been ex[28]panded, the measures previously applied to Jews in the Reich could be regarded only as a "partial solution" to the Jewish question. Thus it was quite appropriate to refer to their application to Jews in the occupied territories as a "total solution." Something that doubtless played an important role in this policy was the fact that the Jews in the lands occupied by the German armed forces in 1940-41 represented a security risk not to be taken lightly, especially in view of the countless threats, provocations, and incitements against the Reich then emanating from various leaders of international Jewry.[67] This state of affairs must have suggested the necessity of evacuating all Jews from German-occupied territory in Europe, so far as their removal was not possible through emigration.

Heydrich's assignment was simply to extend to other parts of Europe the policy of emigration and evacuation already in effect in the Reich.[68] In this respect, the "Göring Decree" brought nothing new, except that it empowered Heydrich to enlist the participation of other governmental agencies in applying these measures, if their "competency" were "touched in this connection."[69]

Although Heydrich was basically to continue a pre-existing policy ("namely to solve the Jewish question by emigration and evacuation"), he clearly had to take into account certain objective changes in the preconditions and possibilities for it. The outbreak of war narrowly delimited the policy of emigration, which had been the solution of first choice. Even before, however, the countries to which it was thought the Jews might emigrate proved increasingly reluctant to admit them. This fact was illustrated by the "[PRUS5]Evian Conference" of July 1938. Each of the states participating in this conference brought forth reasons why it no longer could or would take in Jews.[70] Nevertheless, the emigration policy was pursued —even during the war— until all the possibilities were exhausted, as the Jewish authoress Hannah Arendt had to admit. It was only in the autumn of 1941 that Himmler prohibited all further emigration of Jews, though numerous dispensations appear to have been granted.[71] According to Jürgen Rohwer, even as late as 1944 several shiploads of Jewish émigrés left Rumania *via* the Black Sea under protection of the German Navy.[72] All this contradicts the extermination claim.

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[67] The Jewish agitation against the Reich started before Hitler came to power, increased after 1933, and continued all the way through the war. See Heinz Roth, *Was hätten wir Väter wissen müssen?*, part 2, pp. 52~ff. and p. 113; Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, pp. 244ff.

[68] See regarding this: Scheidl, *Geschichteder Verfemung Deutschland*, vol.5, pp.23ff., and Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, pp. 144ff.

[69] Even Uwe Dietrich Adam, who has likewise fallen for the Final Solution legend, evaluates the decree in the same sense in *Judenpolitik im 3. Reich*, pp. 308-309. Adler describes this attempt at objectivity, remarkable in the literature of "coming to terms with the past," as being a little naive, of course, in *Der verwaltete Mensch*, preface, p. xxvii. He himself was not able to oppose to this anything but hazy formulations which lacked any foundation.

[70] Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 138; *Instauration*, Nov. 1977.

[71] Hannah Arendt, p. 67; Krausnick, *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 373.

[72] Jürgen Rohwer, *Die Versenkung der jüdischen Flüchtlingstransporter Struma und Mefkure im Schwarzen Meer (Februar 1942, August 1942)*. See also Härtle, *Freispruch für*

Every Jewish émigré is living proof that the physical destruction of the Jewish people was not the aim of the Reich Government.

Besides emigration, the settlement of all Jews in some out of the way place was considered a possible solution, even before the war, and not just by the German Government. The term "evacuation" was applied to this plan, too. On a practical level, the German Government first contemplated, in or about 1938, the island of Madagascar as a settlers colony for the Jews. Here Germany was in accord with the initial plan for the establishment of a Jewish "homeland" put forth by the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl.[73] The Madagascar Plan, which the [29] proponents of the extermination thesis seem to have great difficulty in bringing themselves to mention, and seldom take seriously, did not appear within the realm of possibility until the defeat of France in 1940, since Madagascar was a French colony.[74] There were repeated discussions on this proposal between Germany and France, but the Madagascar plan ultimately fell through, owing to the resistance of the Vichy Government.

On the other hand, the recently annexed territories in Eastern Europe afforded new opportunities for the evacuation of the Jews from the West, and this development is something Göring may also have had in mind when he issued his "decree." If so, that would explain why he directed Heydrich to submit a "draft showing the organizational, factual, and financial measures already taken for the execution of the intended final solution of the Jewish question."[75]

One must not forget that to the National Socialists the term "Final Solution" had always meant colonization and isolation of the Jews in one particular territory. As early as 1933, the well-known political scientist Dr. Johann von Leers wrote, in his book *14 Jahre Judenrepublik* ("Fourteen Years of the Jewish Republic"):

> For all its radicalism, our struggle against Jewry has never aimed at the destruction of the Jewish people, but rather at the protection of the German people. We have every reason to wish the Jewish people success in an honorable national development in a land of their own, so long as they lack the will or the opportunity to interfere ever again with Germany's national development. Hostility to Jews for its own sake is stupid and, in the last analysis, barbaric. Our opposition to the Jews is based upon the desire to rescue our own people from spiritual, economic, and political enslavement to Jewry. The basic idea of Zionism, to organize the Jewish people as a nation among nations in a land of their own, is — provided no ambitions of world-domination are involved— healthy and justified. Instead of fruitlessly shoving the Jewish problem on each other, century after century, it would

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Deutschland, pp. 162-163. The immigration policy of the government of the Reich is extensively described by Scheidl in *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 5, pp. 23ff. Compare also Roth, *Was hatten wir Väter wissen müssen?*, part 2, pp. 138ff. Rassinier proved with the help of the Report of the Committee to Save the Hungarian Jews, by Dr. Reszö Kasztner (the so-called Kasztner Report) that Jewish immigration had been encouraged by German agencies throughout the war (*Was nun, Odysseus?*, pp. 84ff.). Training camps were even established to teach agriculture and handicrafts to those Jews who declared themselves willing to immigrate to Palestine (Scheidl, *op. cit.*, p. 28).

[73] Harwood, *Six Million?*, pp. 5-6; Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, p. 165; Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 150. Concerning the development of the Madagascar plan, see also Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 5, pp. 31ff. The existence of the Madagascar plan is, by the way, undisputed. Even before the German government's efforts, the Polish and French governments had considered a similar plan. Compare also Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 86ff.

[74] Thus, for example, Kempner in *Eichmann*, p. 107, attempts, without convincing evidence, to dismiss it as an "alibi."

[75] Harwood, *Six Million?* p. 5.

> behoove the European nations to rid themselves of Jewry, once and for all, by organizing the settlement of the Jews in an adequate and wholesome extraEuropean colonial territory.[76]

That is how a prominent National Socialist viewed the Jewish question. No one can claim that his statements contain the slightest hint of an embryonic plan to exterminate the Jews. The promotion of the Madagascar Plan, before and even during the first years of the war, proves that von Leer's conception of the solution to the Jewish problem simply reflected the policy of the German Government. All the many attempts to show that the Madagascar Plan was never given serious consideration have no basis in fact.

Even Heydrich, who is constantly represented as a particularly uncompromising advocate of "exterminating the Jews" was quite obviously interested in a "territorial solution." From a letter dated June 24, 1940, in which he requests Foreign Secretary Ribbentrop to take part in forthcoming discussions on the final solution of the Jewish question, his views on the matter are clear:

[30]

> Das Gesamtproblem —es handelt sich bereits um rund 3,25 Millionen Juden in den heute deutscher Hoheitsgewalt unterstehenden Gebieten – kann durch Auswanderung nicht mehr gelöst werden; eine territoriale Endlösung wird daher notwendig.
>
> The very size of the problem —and we have to consider that there are about three and a quarter million Jews in the territories now under German control– means that some *territorial* solution will have to be found.[77]

And Himmler, in a memorandum accompanying a policy report to Hitler, probably from around May 1940, stated:

> Den Begriff Juden hoffe ich durch die Möglichkeit einer grossen Auswanderung sämtlicher Juden nach Afrika oder sonst in eine Kolonie völlig auslöschen zu sehen.
>
> The possibility of a large-scale emigration of the whole Jewish People to Africa or some other colony leads me to hope that we may have found a way of loosening the grip of the Jews once and for all.[78]

It is worth noting, by the way, that in the same document Himmler expressly rejects "from inner conviction" the idea of physically exterminating a people as "un-Germanic and impossible" ("aus innerer Überzeugung als ungermanisch und unmöglich"). Hitler found this report to be "very good and correct" ("sehr gut und richtig").[79] He is also supposed to have stated at the time that he intended to "evacuate all Jews from Europe" ("sämtliche Juden aus Europa zu evakuieren").[80] According to *Hitlers Tischgespräche* ("Hitler's Table Talk"), a volume of selections from stenographic records of Hitler's private conversations, edited by one of the stenographers, Dr. Henry Picker, the accuracy and authenticity of which no one has ever disputed, Hitler declared,

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[76] Johann von Leers, *14 Jahre Judenrepublik*, vol. II (Berfin 1933), p. 126. According to the program of the NSDAP, National Socialist anti-semitism was geared to the separation of the races and not toward a physical annihilation of the Jews. See Sündermann, *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 212.

[77] Evidence document number 464 of the Jerusalem Eichmann Trial, here quoted from Krausnick, *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 355. Adler (*op. cit.*, preface, p. XXVIII) sees in this of course only an example of "Sprachregelung" ("Sprachregelung" refers to the "conventions of speech" that Exterminationists allege were employed by German bureaucrats to veil their supposed crimes- Trans.). Nevertheless, the term "Territoriale Endlösung" (territorial final solution) can scarcely be understood semantically and with regard to the German government's handling of the Jewish problem in any other sense than a resettlement of the Jews into a definite territory.

[78] *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1957,p. 197.

[79] *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1957, p. 194; compare also Reitlinger, *op. cit.* p. 41.

[80] Krausnick, *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 356.

on July 24, 1942, that the evacuation of the Jews was among his plans for the post-war era.[81]

If nothing else, Heydrich's statement proves that the term "Final Solution" was indeed used in connection with the plan of removing the Jews to a territory where they could live as a separate community in their own state. But all the remarks by leading National Socialists quoted above show this is how they really viewed the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question." Utterances of equal clarity in which the term "Final Solution" points, either directly or even indirectly, to the "extermination of the Jews" simply do not exist. The plan of the National Socialist authorities generally corresponded to the Zionists' demand for their own Jewish state, the main difference being that Zionist aspirations focused exclusively on Palestine.

Furthermore, the term "Final Solution" was used in this sense in an official document even after the so-called Wannsee Conference, at which —so the story goes— it was decided to "exterminate" the Jews and details of that project were worked out. On February 10, 1942, Franz Rademacher, head of Department "Deutschland III" of the Foreign Office (the bureaucratic liaison between the Foreign Office and the SS), [31] issued a directive on the "Final Solution" of which the part that interests us here reads as follows:

> Der Krieg gegen die Sowjetunion hat inzwischen die Möglichkeit gegeben, andere Territorien für die Endlösung zur Verfügung zu stellen. Demgemäss hat der Führer entschieden, dass die Juden nicht nach Madagaskar, sondern nach dem Osten abgeschoben werden sollen. Madagaskar braucht mithin nicht mehr für die Endlösung vorgesehen zu werden.
>
> The war with the Soviet Union has in the meantime created the possibility of disposing of other territories for the Final Solution. In consequence the Führer has decided that the Jews should be evacuated not to Madagascar, but to the East. Madagascar need no longer therefore be considered in connection with the Final Solution.[82]

]It is evident that in this context, too, the term "Final Solution" can only mean the resettlement and segregation of the Jews in a distinct territory. Whenever you find some scribbler claiming this policy was a "cloak to hide the real plans for the Final Solution" —to use Reitlinger's phrase— you may be sure he is uniformly biased.[83]

In view of all these facts, not to mention the unambiguous wording of the document, the "Göring Decree" cannot be said to contain the slightest indication that Heydrich was being "officially entrusted with the administration

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[81] Henry Picker, Hitters Tischgespräche, p. 471. See also Scheidl, *Geschichte de Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 5, pp. 32-33.

[82] Nuremberg Document NG-3933, Wilhelmstrasse Trial, here quoted after Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 89. See also Harwood, *Six Million?*, p. 5.

[83] One of the judges in the Wilhelmstrasse Trial, Leon W. Powers, is supposed to have voiced in his dissenting opinion, as Helmut Sündermann reports (*Deutsche Notizen*, pp. 353-354, footnote), the following interpretation, regarding the term "*Endlösung*. "... [the] fact is, that after the first measures against the Jews were started, the expression "*Endlösung"* became common. In the initial stages "*Endlösung"*meant forced emigration. For a time, this word meant deporting the jews to Madagascar. As a result of the Wannsee Conference, "*Endlösung"* came to mean deportation to a work camp in the East. Except for a very few initiators, it never meant extermination..."

The opinion of Judge Powers was, considering the situation at the time, and in the face of world opinion, remarkably brave. The final sentence and the judge's following remarks, that extermination had been carried out in the highest secrecy, and that not more than a hundred persons had been informed about the whole affair, was probably a necessary concession to the *Zeitgeist*. Powers passed judgement on this point, as Sündermann (*op. cit.*) remarked, without probative evidence. The hypothesis that not more than a hundred persons were involved in exterminations of such enormous extent seems almost absurd.

of murder" as the Jewish-American Nuremberg prosecutor Kempner so melodramatically put it. The obvious purpose of the "decree" was to consolidate and extend throughout the whole German sphere of influence in Europe the pre-existing policy of "forcing out" Jewry by means of emigration and deportation. To that end, Heydrich was ordered to submit a plan outlining preliminary measures for accomplishing the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" which was still conceived as resettlement of the Jews in a territory of their own —something on the order of Theodor Herzl's *Judenstaat* not as the physical extermination of the Jewish people, that recurrent but undocumented and indemonstrable allegation.

In passing, be it noted the claim that the "nazis exterminated 6,000,000 Jews" is nonsensical simply because the Reich Government never had even a remote possibility of doing so. At the beginning of the war, the world Jewish population amounted to 16,000,000.[84] Of that the number of Jews living in areas under German control at the time of its greatest extent was —as Richard Harwood has shown— no more than 3,000,000.[85] Significantly, the New York Jewish paper *Aufbau* reported, in its issue of June 30, 1965, that the Bonn Government had already received 3,375,000 applications for "restitution."[86] Any commentary would be superfluous.

The "Wannsee Protocol"

Leaving aside the "Göring Decree" the "key document" for the extermination thesis is the alleged record of discussions said to have been [32] held on January 20, 1942 at the offices of the German section of Interpol (No. 56/58 Gross Wannsee Road, Berlin), under the chairmanship of Heydrich. Among the participants reportedly were a number of ministerial and other high-ranking officials whose administrative "competency" was "touched" by the projected "total solution of the Jewish question in Europe." The "minutes" of this conference, usually designated the "Wannsee Protocol" were presented in evidence by Chief Prosecutor Robert M.W. Kempner at the NMT "Wilhelmstrasse Trial" (Case XI; U.S. *vs* Weizsaecker) as document NG-2586.

Given the importance generally attributed to the "Wannsee Protocol" I thought it necessary to reproduce the entire document here, despite its length, so that each line may be studied in its proper context (see Appendices I and II).[87] The version of the "Wannsee Protocol" we shall be discussing is the "facsimile" that appears in Kempner's book *Eichmann und Komplizen*.[88]

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[84] Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 25. In all probability the number was even higher, because Rassinier points out (*Das Drama der Juden Europas*, pp. 145, 146) the Jewish population of the world reached 15.8 million by the year 1932, according to the statements of the distinguished jewish statistician Dr. Arthur Ruppin.

[85] Harwood, *Six Million?*, p. 6. Regarding the absurdity of the extermination thesis see also Scheidl, *op. cit.*, vol. 5, pp. 21f.

[86] Harwood, *Six Million?*, p. 28, last paragraph. See also Härtle in *Das Freie Forum*, edition 4/1975, p. 4.

[87] The document is quoted here from a facsimile reproduced in Kempner's book *Eichmann und Komplizen* (pp. 133f0. It can be found in its entirety also in Schnabel (*Macht ohne Moral*, pp. 496ff., Document 176). Elsewhere it is, as far as I can determine, only cited in excerpts.

[88] Adler presents yet another document, the protocol of a conference at the Prague castle on the 10th of October, 1941. Heydrich, Karl Hermann Frank, Eichmann, Günther, and four other National Socialist functionaries are supposed to have taken part in this. (Adler, *Der verwaltete Mensch*, pp. 87-88). It probably was a preliminary meeting to the Wannsee Conference. There is no

First of all, it should be noted that these "minutes" are not a protocol in the true sense of the word. According to the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, they must actually be notes made *after* the conference by Eichmann and his colleague Rolf Günther.[89] It is rather peculiar that even the more scholarly members of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte use the term "protocol".[90] For this designation is usually thought to apply only to minutes recorded *during* a particular session of a trial, hearing, conference, etc., which the responsible participants guarantee to be a true and accurate report by their signature. Only such a protocol can be considered a more or less valid record of the proceeding. Jottings from memory —known in German officials as "Aktenvermerke" ("notes for the files")— may, on the other hand, be designated "Erinnerungsniederschriften" ("aide-mémoire" or "memoranda"). To these one assigns very little probative value, since there is always a possibility of lapses of memory on the part of the writer. As a rule, they have the force of proof only when combined with other circumstantial evidence.

There can be little doubt that this aide-mémoire has been described as a "protocol" in order to create the impression that the information it contains about the subject and conclusions of the Wannsee Conference is trustworthy in every respect. At any rate, its authenticity and accuracy were simply taken for granted in the "Wilhelmstrasse Trial" and the proponents of the extermination theory have adhered to that assumption ever since. Yet it is questionable that the document, in its present form, was prepared by Eichmann or any other participant in the conference, whether it is in fact genuine. Even the format of the document gives rise to suspicions about its authenticity.

As Professor Rassinier has noted, the "Wannsee Protocol" bears no official imprint, no date, no signature, and was written with an ordinary typewriter on small sheets of paper.[91] This latter fact cannot, of course, be readily gathered from the "facsimile" in Kempner's book (The original [33] is not available for examination). What strikes one first about the document, as reproduced there, is indeed that it does not bear the name of an agency, nor the serial number under which an official record of the proceedings may have been kept by the agency that initiated them. That is totally out of keeping with official usage, and is all the more incomprehensible because it is stamped "Geheime Reichssache" ("Top Secret"). One can only say that any "official record" of governmental business without a file number or even administrative identification —especially a document classified "Top Secret"— must be regarded with the utmost skepticism. Kempner's "facsimile" of the "Wannsee Protocol" does bear the designation "D. III. 29. g. Rs" on the first page, which may be taken as some kind of official record number. However, the German bureaucracy did not normally classify documents in that way.

All these oddities should be enough to arouse suspicion that the "Wannsee Protocol" is a forgery —especially since there are numerous relevant

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word of a plan for the extermination of Jews, which doesn't prevent Adler from linking this preliminary meeting to his allegations.

[89] Compare with Rothe's citation (*Die Endlösung der Judenfrage*, pp. 194-195), in communication from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (January 8, 1974).

[90] For example Krausnick, in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 392.

[91] *Was ist Wahrheit?*, pp. 91-92.

examples of such fabrications.[92] Nevertheless, it does not appear that any of the "court historians" have bothered to check the authenticity of the document, or perhaps have even seen the original. In any case, when Heinrich Härtle raised this question at a historians conference held on the 30th anniversary of the Nuremberg IMT trial, he received no answers.[93] It is worth noting that even in his Auschwitz Trial deposition Helmut Krausnick cites merely a *photocopy* of the "Wannsee Protocol" from the files of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte.[94]

The "Wannsee Protocol" does not clearly outline an "extermination plan." Of course, the absence of any reference to such a plan in this document has not stopped the proponents of the extermination thesis from citing it for support. However, so many participants in the Wannsee Conference survived the fall of the Third Reich that at first the extermination mythologists could not risk making grossly false charges about the subject and outcome of the conference. Hence they limited themselves to more or less vague statements about "preparations" for an "extermination program." Otherwise, the document could not be reconciled with the testimony of the surviving participants in the conference, who unanimously disputed the charge that it was held to plan the "extermination of European Jewry." The only discussion they could recall concerned the deportation of Jews for a labour force in the occupied Eastern territories. In his book *Eichmann und Komplizen*, Kempner presents selected passages from transcripts of his interrogations of surviving participants in the conference, and, of course, maintains that they "resorted to denials" for "fear of being identified with the murder plan."[95] Certainly, that is nothing more than an allegation, and he can "support" it only by going back to the "Wannsee Protocol." Just as telling as this begging of the question are the low and brutal methods of intimidation that Kempner —a former Prussian senior civil servant— employed in his [34] interrogations of these and other Reich officials. Even the interrogation transcripts he quotes —which he has, no doubt, "doctored"— testify to those methods. Yet he failed to induce any of the surviving participants in the Wannsee Conference to serve as a key witness for the prosecution.

The very fact that the "Wannsee Protocol" does not clearly outline an "extermination plan" speaks against the theory that it is entirely a forgery. Also opposing the total forgery hypothesis is the fact that the particulars of the document are essentially correct, though the population statistics on the Jews (pp. 6 and 7) are certainly overestimates.[96] Of course, even a substantially forged document does not have to be false in every detail. No doubt forgers could have obtained without difficulty the needed assurance about numerous

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[92] One need think only of the so-called Gerstein Report; on this, Udo Walendy in *Europa in Flammen*, vol. I, pp. 422ff., and *Mensch und Maß* edition 13 of july 9, 1974. Further, David Irving in *The War Path*, pp. xviii. The key documents as to the war-guilt question are also of questionable authenticity, as Udo Walendy has established in *Währheit für Deutschland*, pp. 442ff.

[93] *Das Freie Forum*, edition 4/1975, p. 3.

[94] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 392, footnote 189.

[95] *Op. cit.*, pp. 151ff. See also the statement of State Secretary Bühler, one of the participants in the Wannsee Conference, in the Nuremberg IMT proceedings (IMT XII, 78-80) cited by Rothe, *op. cit.*, pp. 145ff.; Bühler, among other things, stated that it was the intention of Hitler to resettle the Jews in the northeast of Europe, in Russia.

[96] This is indeed the opinion of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich. Compare Rothe, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-195. Rothe sees in this a proof for the falsification of the Wannsee Protocol (*op. cit.*, pp. 179-180).

points that actually were discussed at the conference, and incorporated them into a forgery.

While it remains to be seen whether the document is entirely a forgery, I am convinced that segments of certain paragraphs were either subsequently added, deleted, or altered to suit the purposes of the Nuremberg trials and the kind of "historiography" that followed in their footsteps.[97] Obviously, it is easy to falsify an unsigned document written on an ordinary typewriter. A piece of writing not identified by one or more signatures at its conclusion could be altered in part, abridged, or created out of thin air. Entire paragraphs could be easily inserted or excised, without that being recognizable at first glance, since a machine with a typeface corresponding to that of the one on which the original was written would not be hard to obtain, and, if necessary, could be specially constructed for the desired purpose. Only by recourse to the techniques of criminological investigation can such fabrications be exposed beyond a shadow of a doubt, unless —as in the case of the "Wannsee Protocol"— the content alone is enough to serve as proof of forgery.

Despite its generally dubious character, in particular, the fact that even its format is quite at variance with German official usage, nobody seems to have undertaken to examine the *content* of the "Wannsee Protocol" with a view to determining whether the document is authentic. Even in their Auschwitz Trial depositions, the "historians" of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte failed to address themselves to this obvious question, though as advisors to the court it was incumbent upon them to do so. They simply took it for granted that the "document" was genuine in its entirety, and proceeded with a reckless interpretation of it. Their treatment of the "Wannsee Protocol" was at odds with the methods of scholarship, especially since they could not have been unaware that the French historian Paul Rassinier had expressed some well-founded doubts about its authenticity.[98] The scholarly method demands that one come to grips with opposing views and not merely gloss over them, as those who have almost succeeded in portraying the "extermination of the Jews" as an established fact habitually do.

[35]

Assuming that an official memorandum was prepared after the conclusion of the Wannsee Conference, a critical examination of the document Kempner presents as that record shows it is not a complete and accurate report of the meeting. Several passages do not fit into the overall picture. Even if much of the document is genuine, those passages can only be subsequent interpolations.

According to Section II of the "Wannsee Protocol" Heydrich gave the conference participants a review of the measures that had been thus far

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[97] Rothe, in pp. 178ff., gives additional evidence for the possibility that the entire protocol is a forgery, although not all of it seems convincing to me. Rothe's main objection against the authenticity of the protocol, that Heydrich wasn't in Berlin on January, 20, 1942, but rather in Prague (pp. 180, 194-185, *oP. cit.*), is certainly of minor importance. That the Wannsee Conference actually took place, even if possibly not on the 20th of January, there can be no doubt because this was confirmed by the participants of the conference. A mistake in the dates of the protocol would, of course, be an example of the unreliability of aides mémoire, even if one didn't conclude from it that the whole document was forged.

[98] In Rassinier's books, *Was ist Wahrheit ?*, pp. 91f. and 117, and *Was nun Odysseus?*, pp. 82ff.

employed to "force the Jews out of the living space of the German people."[99] In the report of his statements, however, only the policy of encouraging their emigration is mentioned, not the Reich Government's many attempts to create a homeland for the Jews on Madagascar. That omission seems a particularly significant datum when one reflects that the plan for creating a Jewish homeland had for some years played a role in the policy deliberations of the German Government, and had even then by no means been abandoned (see p. 29 above). Heydrich would not have forgotten to mention this plan in reviewing Germany's Jewish policy to date. Of course, Eichmann —assuming he composed the memorandum— could have neglected to record any discussion of the Madagascar Plan, but that is most unlikely, since it was a project with which he was deeply involved.[100] Thus one cannot rule out the possibility that a portion of the original typescript dealing with the Madagascar Plan was omitted in order to prevent the obvious identification of the term "Final Solution" which appears repeatedly in the "Wannsee Protocol" with the plan of founding a Jewish homeland.

Heydrich is supposed to have concluded his review with the statement that Himmler had prohibited any further emigration of Jews "in view of... the possibilities in the East." Most likely, this vague and insinuating reference to unspecified "possibilities" was also slipped into the document to facilitate its interpretation as an "extermination plan." For would not Heydrich have mentioned here that the Jews were —as numerous documents attest— desperately needed as manpower for the projected armaments industry in the East?

In the first paragraph of Section III, the evacuation of the Jews to the East is, in fact, mentioned as a "further possible solution" ("Lösungsmöglichkeit") and in the next paragraph it is stated that "here practical experience has already been gained which is of great importance for the coming Final Solution" ("doch werden hier bereits jene praktischen Erfahrungen gesammelt, die im Hinblick auf die kommende Endlösung der Judenfrage von wichtiger Bedeutung sind").* If one bears in mind that the German Government never thought of "extermination" as the "Final Solution" but, at least since the beginnings of the Madagascar Plan, understood it as settlement of the Jews in an independent state, then this passage seems hardly remarkable. The colonization [36] of all Jews in a state of their own entailed numerous problems, and its feasibility had to be tested in the ghettos of the occupied Eastern territories. Nevertheless, one should not reject out of hand the possibility that the second paragraph of Section III was subsequently inserted into the document, in order to make it seem as though the testing of various methods of killing were under consideration —after all, the term "Final Solution" is usually equated with the "systematic extermination of the Jews." Thus Krausnick, in his Auschwitz Trial deposition, conjectures that "this euphemistic speech may have been intended to conceal the idea of using some

[99] Rassinier points out that in the French edition of the "Protocol", the concept "Zurückdrängung" (pushing back) has been translated as "elimination", which again was interpreted as "Vernichtung" (extermination), and in this sense it has been exploited by the press for many years. See *Was ist Wahrheit?,* p. 91, footnote 27.

[100] Harwood, *Six Million?*, p. 5; see also Krausnick in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 355, and Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 30, 86.

*Typically, these words are omitted from the NMT translation of this passage.— T.F.

of the Jews condemned to be deported in an experiment in extermination… which might prove useful for the large-scale liquidation plans."[101] Krausnick's remarks are, by the way, an outstanding example of the kind of suppositions, conjectures, and facile leaping to conclusions that one so frequently encounters in the attempts to "prove" the extermination thesis. Moreover, with this paragraph omitted, the document sounds more plausible, especially if one brings in the Rademacher directive (see pp. 30-37 above).

None of these questionable points is of decisive importance, however, since the extermination thesis is principally based on two other paragraphs in the document, which are usually quoted separately and out of context. If one views the "Wannsee Protocol" as a whole, these passages, especially, stand out as foreign entities; hence at least this portion of the document may very well be a forgery.

It seems appropriate here to return to these two paragraphs. They are on pages 7 and 8, and read as follows:

> Unter entsprechender Leitung sollen im Zuge der Endlösung die Juden in geeigneter Weise im Osten zum Arbeitseinsatz kommen. In grossen Arbeitskolonnen, unter Trennung der Geschlechter, werden die arbeitsfähigen Juden Strassenbauend in diese Gebiete geführt, wobei zweifellos ein Grossteil durch natürliche Verminderung ausfallen wird.
>
> Der allfällig endlich verbleibende Restbestand wird, da es sich bei diesem um den widerstandsfähigsten Teil handelt, entsprechend behandelt werden müssen, da dieser, eine natürliche Auslese darstellend, bei Freilassung als Keimzelle eines neuen jüdischen Aufbaus anzusprechen ist. (Siehe die Erfahrung der Geschichte.)
>
> Under proper direction the Jews should now in the course of the Final Solution [*Endlösung*] be brought to the East in a suitable way for use as labour. In big labour gangs, with separation of the sexes, the Jews capable of work are brought to these areas and employed in road-building, in which task undoubtedly a great part will fall out through natural diminution [*natürliche Verminderung*].
>
> The remnant that finally is able to survive all this —since this is undoubtedly the part with the strongest resistance— must be treated accordingly [entsprechend behandelt werden] since these people, representing a natural selection, are to be regarded upon release as the germ cell of a new Jewish development. (See the experience of history.)

With the exception of the initial sentence of the first paragraph, these two paragraphs do not fit into the framework of the document, and that quite apart from the obscurity of the second paragraph, which for the [37] record of such an important conference is unusual, to say the least. Rassinier has raised doubts about the authenticity of this passage.[102] He maintains that the second of these two paragraphs does not follow the first in the original text, noting that when the "Wannsee Protocol" is quoted in the press, the first paragraph is separated from the second with ellipses. That would, of course, suggest that something has been omitted from the passage. However, the original of the "Wannsee Protocol" was apparently not at his disposal, or else he would have quoted the missing part to support his thesis. I myself have not been able to find any corroboration for this claim. Nevertheless, should it be true, then, in addition to the version of the "Wannsee Protocol" put in circulation by Kempner, there must be another, dissimilar version in circulation. Moreover, Rassinier holds that the two paragraphs are not written in the same style. That they do not stem from the same writer would be difficult to prove, though the second paragraph, in particular, seems even more vague and verbose than the

[101] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 393.
[102] *Was nun, Odysseus?*, p. 82.

rest of the "Wannsee Protocol." Taken as a whole, Rassinier's arguments for the manipulation of this passage are, by themselves, not sufficiently convincing.

Nevertheless, there can be no mistaking the incompatibility of these two paragraphs with the rest of the document. Hence it is not at all surprising that they should be quoted out of context. Only by means of such devices can critical readers be deceived about the actual content of the "Wannsee Protocol." The need for them bespeaks great laxity on the part of the forgers. They simply were not careful enough to bring their forgeries in line with the rest of the text.

The statement, in the first of the two paragraphs, that the Jews capable of work would be brought "to these areas" while building roads is disconcerting, for it has not been mentioned previously to *which* "areas" the Jews were to be sent. In fact, nothing in the preceding text prepares us for this statement. Moreover, it does not correspond to what actually happened: There is not one known case of Jews being "evacuated to the East while building roads." Likewise, it conflicts with the first statement in the paragraph, that the Jews should be "brought to the East in a way suitable for use as labour." That this was the real plan is substantiated —as we have already noted several times— by numerous documents on the incorporation of the Jews into the war economy, an objective that would have ruled out the intentional decimation of able-bodied Jews through an excessively rigorous trip to the Eastern territories, let alone the liquidation of the survivors. The phrase "given treatment accordingly" ("entsprechend behandelt"), from which the proponents of the extermination thesis invariably infer that the survivors were to be killed, obviously lends itself to other interpretations.[103]

Even from these few discrepancies one can tell the passage is of dubious authenticity, but when one considers the final paragraph of page 8, it seems utterly spurious.

[38]

> Die evakuierten Juden werden zunächst Zug um Zug in sogennante Duchgangsghettos verbracht, um von dort aus weiter nach dem Osten transportiert zu werden.
>
> The evacuated Jews are brought first group by group into the so-called transit ghettos, in order from there to be transported farther to the East.

"Transporting" Jews to the East is certainly something quite different from having them build roads on their way to that destination.* In fact, one of the participants in the conference, State Secretary Bühler, brought up the "transport problem" a second time, according to page 14 of the document. If one planned on having the Jews march to the East while building roads, transportation would not have been that much of a problem. This glaring contradiction would not appear in a completely authentic record of such an important conference. From it alone one must conclude that the two paragraphs on pages 7 and 8 of the "Wannsee Protocol" which are constantly invoked as proof of the extermination thesis, did not exist in the original document. Moreover, no plans for this combined death march and construction project are discussed in any other part of the "Wannsee Protocol." Simply

[103] For example, the wording "entsprechend behandelt" [treated accordingly] could also mean that the Jews who were considered a "natürliche Auslese" [natural selection] would receive a special training at a given time so that on their release they would in every respect be worthy of their tasks as the nucleus of the new independent Jewish state sought by the Germans.

* This, by the way, is what the German phrase "Strassenbau end... geführt" actually means, not " brought to these areas and employed in road-building " as the NMT version has it.— T.F.

because of its muddled language, the paragraph beginning with "the remnant that is able to survive all this" ("der allfällig endlich verbleibende Restbestand" —what a mouthful!) seems of dubious authenticity.

Time and again, it has been asserted —for example, by Kempner– that all participants in the conference knew perfectly well that the subject under discussion was the "extermination of the Jews." But if that is so, then why did Heydrich talk in riddles? In this connection, Albert Wucher makes an interesting remark:

> Apart from Heydrich, the Chief of the Security Service and the Reich Security Main Office, nobody who was at Gross Wannsee on the 20th of January had completely made up his mind about what even the most basic solution would be.[104]

In other words, only Heydrich knew what he wanted, but didn't come out with it. So what was the point of holding this conference?

Once again, let us put the "Wannsee Protocol" to the test, this time by omitting the dubious sentences from it. If one simply removes the passage from "in big labour gangs..." to "(See experience of history.)" the continuity is in no way disrupted. On the contrary, only then does the text make sense. From the last paragraph of page 7 to the third paragraph on page 8 it would now read:

> Unter entsprechender Leitung sollen nun im Zuge der Endlösung die Juden in geeigneter Weise im Osten zum Arbeitseinsatz kommen.
>
> Im Zuge der praktischen Durchführung der Endlösung wird Europa vom Westen nach Osten durchkämmt. Das Reichsgebiet einschliesslich Protektorat Böhmen und [39] Mähren wird, allein schon aus Gründen der Wohnungsfrage und sonstigen sozialpolitischen Notwendigkeiten, vorweggenommen werden müssen.
>
> Die evakuieten Juden werden zunächst Zug um Zug in sogenannte Durchgangsghettos verbracht, um von dort aus weiter nach dem Osten transportiert zu werden.
>
> Under the proper direction the Jews should now in the course of the Final Solution be brought to the East in a suitable way for use as labour.
>
> In the program of the practical execution of the Final Solution, Europe is combed through from the West to the East. The Reich area, including the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, will have to be taken in advance, alone for reasons of the housing problem and other social and political necessities.
>
> The evacuated Jews are brought first group by group into the so-called transit ghettos, in order from there to be transported farther to the East.

Only this reading is consistent with the numerous documents from the period indicating that all internees —including Jews— were regarded as a source of urgently needed manpower for the war economy, and, after the conquest of the Eastern territories, were to be transported there in successive stages. Here it would be impossible to treat all these documents at length.[105] Only one of them merits special attention, owing to its unmistakable connection with the Wannsee Conference, a wire from Himmler to the Inspector-General of Concentration Camps, SSGruppenführer Richard Glücks, dated January 26, 1942. It was presented in evidence at the NMT "I.G. Farben Trial" (Case VI; U.S. *vs* Krauch) as document NI-500, and is quoted by Reitlinger:

> Richten Sie sich darauf ein, in den nächsten 4 Wochen 100 000 männliche Juden und bis 50 000 Jüdinnen in die KL aufzunehmen. Grosse wirschaftliche Aufgaben werden in den nächsten Wochen an die Konzentrationslager herantreten.

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[104] *Eichmanns gab es viele*, p. 109.

[105] See note 51 of chapter 1, above.

> During the next few weeks 100,000 Jews and 50,000 Jewesses will be sent to concentration camps, which will have to deal with major economic problems and tasks.[106]

Reitlinger makes a clumsy attempt to contrast Himmler and Heydrich by attributing responsibility for initiating the "extermination of the Jews" to Heydrich, while portraying Himmler as interested only in pooling Jewish labour.[107] In his Auschwitz Trial deposition, Dr. Martin Broszat of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte argues in more or less the same vein. Apparently, he found it hard to come to terms with this document: On the one hand, he expresses the opinion that Himmler only temporarily exempted able-bodied Jews from "extermination." On the other, he speaks of "two conflicting aims with two different authorities in charge" namely, the alleged plan to "exterminate" the Jews and the well-documented plan to use their labour.[108]

These are, of course, very feeble attempts to explain away a fact that does not fit in with the extermination thesis. Even Krausnick, in his Auschwitz Trial deposition, has to admit that Jews were still being employed in the munitions factories during the final year of the war. As late as 1944, he says, "tens of thousands of Jews were forcibly removed from the Polish camps to Germany."[109] Leaving aside the rather [40] melodramatic expression "forcibly removed" his statement is completely accurate, and simply confirms the fact that the realities of the time made it necessary to bring Jews back from the East to work in the armaments industry. In such exegetics as those of Reitlinger and Krausnick, one senses the utter embarrassment which the numerous documents on the conscription of Jewish labour cause all proponents of the extermination thesis. By 1944, there would have been hardly a Jew alive in the German Reich had "Final Solution" actually meant "extermination of all Jews."

The fact that the Jews deported to the East were to be employed in war industries there[110] is also accords with the proposal, ascribed to Heydrich in the "Wannsee Protocol" that Jews over the age of 65 not be evacuated to the East, but removed to a "ghetto for the aged" (p. 287, seventh paragraph). Had the extermination of all Jews been intended, it is inconceivable that elderly Jews would have been spared, much less accorded privileges, especially since in the mass executions allegedly planned a few thousand victims would not have mattered one way or the other. However, if the conscription of Jewish labour were planned —and there can be no doubt of that— it certainly would have made sense to exempt Jews over the age of 65, for one could hardly expect

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[106] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 112; see also Broszat, in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 130. This telegram is not included in Schnabel's document collection.

[107] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 112, 113.

[108] Broszat, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

[109] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 445-446; Broszat, *ibid.* (pp. 158-159) quotes a document according to which, in May 1944, on Hitler's order, 200,000 Jews were brought back to the Reich for important war work.

[110] Regarding Auschwitz, it is said, for instance, in an RSHA telegram to its offices in The Hague, Paris, Brussels and Metz, dated April 29, 1943 (quoted from Schönberner, *Wir haben es gesehen*, p. 241): "The camp in Auschwitz has... again asked that no worrisome disclosures as to how they are to be employed be made to the Jews before they are transported... in consideration of the fulfilment of its extremely important work projects, Auschwitz must be able to accomplish the reception and further assignment of the transports as smoothly as possible." Originating at a time when Jews supposedly had been being "gassed" at Auschwitz for a whole year, this document shows what really awaited the Jews in Auschwitz: "extremely important work projects." But clearly atrocity propaganda had already been disseminated in the lands from which Jews were being evacuated.

much of their performance. Likewise, the fact that the exemption would apply to Jews who were "serious war wounded cases and Jews with war decorations (Iron Cross, First Class)" (p. 287, paragraph eight) does not fit in with the allegation that the Wannsee Conference was held to plot the "extermination of all Jews." This part of the "Wannsee Protocol" is decidedly at odds with the extermination thesis.

Faced with these facts, the extermination mythologists argue that exemptions and other preferential treatment were merely "tactical measures." That is the position Krausnick takes. He alludes, moreover, to the "significant distinction" Heydrich supposedly makes between "evacuation" (in this context, allegedly, "killing") and removal to a "ghetto for the aged."[111] This kind of intellectual legerdemain, whereby one expression is arbitarily defined as "killing" has nothing whatsoever in common with scholarship.

The rest of the "Wannsee Protocol" is obviously irrelevant to the extermination question. One may dispute the feasibility or morality of the approach to the *Mischling* problem set forth in Section IV, but our subject is the "extermination plan" and that passage has no direct bearing on it. This also applies to the next to last paragraph of the document (p. 290), which proponents of the extermination thesis occasionally cite for support. Here, as always, one must keep in mind that the "Wannsee Protocol" is basically questionable in its entirety.

According to this paragraph, the conference ended with a discussion of the "various kinds of solutions" ("die verschiedenen Arten der Lösungsmöglichkeiten"), in which two of the participants advocated that [41] "certain preparatory tasks in the course of the Final Solution should be performed immediately in the territories concerned" and that in this "any disturbing of the population must be avoided." Quite naturally, the term "Final Solution" is used again in this context, and it has been taken by the proponents of the extermination thesis as a synonym for "annihilation of the Jews" which it certainly was not. The expression "Lösungsmöglichkeiten" ("possibilities for a solution") has likewise been interpreted as "possibilities for killing" although there is no point of reference for that interpretation either. To be sure, Krausnick maintains in his Auschwitz Trial deposition that Eichmann interpreted the expression "Lösungsmöglichkeiten" in this way, during the Jerusalem "trial" but he has yet to produce a shred of evidence for this implausible definition.[112]

Since at this stage of the conference the "solution of the Jewish problem in the Government General" was discussed, one would not be amiss in assuming that the term "Lösungsmöglichkeiten" was used with reference to the possibilities for evacuating the Jews in that area. That the populace of the territories involved could have become restless on account of the evacuations is obvious, and actually proves nothing about an "extermination plan." In the course of the evacuation, one could form an estimate of the problems the "Final Solution" would entail. The ability of the Jews to live as a community in a state

[111] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 395-396.
[112] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 394-395.

of their own could be put to the test in the Eastern ghettos. As is well known, the Warsaw ghetto did for some time constitute a community of sorts.[113]

In conclusion, it can be said that the "Wannsee Protocol" —if one does not choose to view it as a total forgery— contains some passages which are at least substantially genuine, along with sentences that do not fit into context, and so must have been subsequently forged into the document. Likewise, several authentic passages may have been excised, for example, details of the Madagascar Plan. Leaving aside any possible manipulations, the document remains questionable simply because its origin is so obscure. In form it hardly corresponds to German official usage, and the original has yet to be submitted to impartial experts who could perhaps determine whether or not it is authentic.[114] As such, the document is hardly adequate proof that a plan existed to exterminate all Jews residing in German-controlled territory. Even in its present form, it does not constitute sufficient proof of that allegation. For in the entire document there is not a word about "exterminating" much less "gassing" the Jews, and the portions of it cited to prove this claim are seen in a different light when one refrains from taking "Final Solution" as a synonym for "extermination."

Further Documents Regarding Deportation

Naturally, the technique of arbitrarily defining terms and concepts, which the extermination mythologists have applied to the "Göring [42] Decree" and the "Wannsee Protocol" has been extended to all other documents pertaining to the deportation of the Jews. Not a single document of this kind makes reference to an "extermination plan" or to "mass gassings" in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Otherwise, the extermination mythologists would not have to resort to the technique of verbal and conceptual falsification. Thus it seems hardly necessary to treat in detail all the various decrees, orders, wires, and such. From the general content of the most commonly cited ones it is easy to see that they actually have nothing to do with an extermination plan and its execution. Quite the contrary: Many of these documents make it clearer than ever that the deported Jews were to be integrated into the war economy.[115]

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[113] On this see for example Burg, Schuld und Schicksal, p. 82 as well as Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 65ff.

[114] On this see also Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 5, pp. 40ff.

[115] See for example the documents in Kempner (*Eichmann und Komplizen*, pp. 121-122, 186-192, 197-199) - partly in facsimile; also Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral*, pp. 487, 506 and 514 (Doc. Nr. 172, 177, 182). Some of these documents relate especially to Auschwitz as a work camp. To this group of documents belongs also the oft-mentioned Korherr Report which, despite widespread opinion, does not contain one word about extermination of Jews. It was nothing but a statistical report about the development and the status of European Jewry up to December 31, 1942, which had been carried out by the SS statistician Korherr for Himmler. This document, among others, was published by Poliakov, Wulf (*op. cit.*, pp. 243-248). Korherr himself recently protested, in a letter to the newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* (No. 31, July 25, 1977, p. 12), against the interpretation of the term "*Sonderbehandlung*" [Special Treatment], which the magazine, following British historian David Irving, made in connection with the Korherr Report. Korherr stated in his letter to the editor: "The allegation that I stated that over a million Jews died as a result of special treatment in the camps of the Governnent General and the Warthegau is likewise untrue. I must protest against the word 'died' in this connection. It was precisely that word "*Sonderbehandlung*" that led me to make a telephone inquiry to the RSHA asking what this word meant. I received the answer that it referred to Jews who were to be settled in the district of Lublin."

In addition to the previously mentioned terms “Final Solution” and “evacuation” the expressions “Jewish resettlement” “colonization of the Jews in the East” and, of course, “deportation” itself are continually interpreted as “annihilation” and “extermination” of the Jews, or, at least, represented as denoting preparation for that. The redefinition of these words is usually justified on the grounds that they were only “euphemisims” or “code words” with which one sought to cover up what was actually happening.[116] By means of this trick —one can hardly call it anything else— which even certain “scholars” have been known to employ, it is easy to furnish most any document with the desired meaning, though conscientious and earnest historians could never be fooled. For not a single document has been found to date that shows when, where, or by whom these alleged “code words” for murder were devised. The “expert witnesses” in the Auschwitz Trial were at a loss to explain the origin of these terms, and they even availed themselves of this dubious mode of argumentation.[117] Whether the governmental agencies and functionaries concerned with the Jewish matter actually “knew” the “real” meaning of the “code words” is a pressing question that is generally not asked and has never been answered.

The expression “special treatment” (“Sonderbehandlung”), which appears in some documents concerning the transport of Jews to concentration camps in the East, deserves particular consideration. This term is not readily understandable. Supposedly, it is also a “code word” for “killing” or “gassing” Jews within the framework of the “extermination program.” But for this definition, too, no credible sources have been found. The actual meaning is not quite so evident as in the case of the terms “Final Solution” “evacuation” and “resettlement.” In all probability, “special treatment” had, from time to time, various meanings, known only to the agencies involved, and today it is often no longer possible to determine exactly what it meant on a given occasion.[118] Used in connection with deportations, it might have meant, for example, “special billeting” which could have been ordered for some compelling reason. One has only to think of the disease carriers among the deportees. In fact, it is well known that a special quarantine camp existed at Auschwitz.[119]
[43]

At the Nuremberg IMT trial, Dr. Ernst Kaltenbrunner, successor to Heydrich, testified that in certain cases the term “special treatment” actually referred to billeting prominent internees in luxury hotels and otherwise granting them special privileges.[120] Theresienstadt was a preferential treatment camp, intended, above all, for elderly or disabled Jewish war veterans, who were accorded good living conditions and exempted from labour service — exactly as specified in the “Wannsee Protocol.” In May 1945, a delegate of the

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[116] See for example Bracher, *Die deutsche Diktatur*, pp. 461, 467, or Poliakov, Wulf, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

[117] Thus, for example, Krausnick in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 373 and 393.

[118] See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-115.

[119] A “chronicle” of this camp exists, written by the former Auschwitz prisoner Otto Wolken, which should of course be taken in a number of its details as a product of the author's imagination. See Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, pp. 139-150. This quarantine camp is explicitly indicated in the Auschwitz Museum’s plan of the camp. (See Smolen, Auschwitz, pp. 140-145, 3rd cover page).

[120] IMT XI, 374. See also Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?* p. 118 and footnote 59, *ibid*.

International Red Cross who had been sent to inspect the camp stated in his report that the Germans could not be blamed for the violent death of even one Jew at Theresienstadt.[121]

To be sure, none of this rules out the possibility that under certain circumstances —for example, in the operations of the *Einsatzgruppen* the term "special treatment" could also have meant "execution without trial." Since the liquidation of Soviet commissars and active partisans, or even those suspected of collusion with them, Jews and non-Jews alike, did take place, sometimes in nearby concentration camps, the term could have meant "execution" in this exceptional case.[122] Nevertheless, such executions had nothing to do with any systematic extermination of Jews on account of their race. Specifically, no documentary evidence has ever been presented to show that in Birkenau "special treatment" was equated with death in the "gas chambers" that allegedly existed at the camp.

"Extermination Camp" Documents

Since there are no documents from German official files which directly substantiate the existence of "gas chambers" at Auschwitz, the extermination mythologists have attempted to deduce the presence of "gas chambers" indirectly, from other documents.

Cited in this regard are, above all, documents relating to the crematoria in Auschwitz-Birkenau, of which there are supposed to have been four. It is usually contended that these crematoria were built specifically for the "extermination program" and so had adjoining "gas chambers." However, the documents thus far presented contain no indication of that. For other reasons, too, they are suspect. At the Nuremberg IMT trial, Soviet prosecutor Alexander Smirnov asserted, during the early morning session of February 19, 1946, that "in the office records of Auschwitz camp there was discovered a voluminous correspondence between the administration of the camp and the firm of Topf and Sons" on the construction of "four powerful crematoria and gas chambers in Birkenau" and that these facilities had been completed by the beginning of 1943. Nevertheless, he presented the Tribunal with [44] only a single "document" in this regard, a letter from the contractor, which lacks any mention of "gas chambers." Thereafter, nothing more was heard or seen of this "voluminous correspondence." The document upon which Smirnov based his allegations reads as follows:

> J.A. Topf & Söhne, Erfurt.
> 12. Februar 1943
> An das Zentralbauamt der SS und Polizei Auschwitz:
> Betr.: Krematorien 2 und 3 für das Kriegsgefangenenlager.
>
> Wir bestätigen den Empfang Ihres Telegramms vom 10. Februar folgenden Inhalts: Wir bestätigen nochmals, dass wir Ihren Auftrag auf 5 Stück dreifacher Muschelöfen erhalten haben, einschliesslich zweier elektrischer Aufzüge für den Aufzug der Leichen und eines provisorischen Aufzuges. Ebenso wurde eine praktische Einrichtung zur Kohlenlieferung bestellt und ferner eine Vorrichtung zum Aschenabtransport. Sie müssen die Vollständige

[121] Red Cross Report, third edition, 1947, p. 132.

[122] On the activity of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the SD see the expert opinion of Hans Adolf Jacobsen in the Auschwitz proceedings, *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 163ff.

> Einrichtung für das Krematorium Nr. 3 liefern. Wir erwarten, dass Sie dafür Sorge tragen, dass alle Maschinen mit ihren Teilen unverzüglich zum Versand gebracht werden.*
> I.A. Topf and Sons, Erfurt; 12 February 1943.
> To Central Construction Office of SS and Police, Auschwitz.
> Subject: Crematoria 2 and 3 for the camp for prisoners of war.
>
> We again acknowledge receipt of your wire of 10 February, as follows:
> We acknowledge receipt of your order for five triple furnaces, including two electric lifts for raising the corpses and one emergency lift. A practical installation for stoking coal was also ordered and one for transporting the ashes. You are to deliver the complete installation for Crematorium Number 3. You are expected to take steps to ensure the immediate dispatch of all the machines complete with parts.[123]

Leaving aside the fact that Birkenau was not a prisoner of war camp at that time, this letter is so confusedly worded as to be unintelligible. If one takes the text read by Smirnov literally, it would seem that the firm of "I.A. Topf and Sons" had ordered cremation equipment from the Central Construction Office! Moreover, one finds it hard to imagine exactly what is meant by "triple furnaces" or a "practical installation for stoking coal."

In the "Report of the Soviet War Crimes Commission, 6 May 1945" which we shall discuss in more detail later, another version of this letter is to be found. There the wording is "fuenf dreiteilige Verbren[45]nungsoefen" ("five tripartite cremation ovens") and "eine brauchbare Einrichtung fuer die Beheizung mit Kohle" ("a workable contrivance for heating with coal"). And this version includes a final sentence missing from the Smirnov text: "Die Einrichtung muss am 10. April 1943 betriebsfertig sein" ("The installation must be ready for use by April 10, 1943").[124]

It goes without saying that this document is very suspicious and — despite Smirnov's assertion to the contrary— it was obviously the only document of its kind the Soviets could produce. This "document" with its two rather disparate versions, is a good example of the type of "evidence" presented at the Nuremberg trials. That is the main reason I chose to bring it up here. Basically, its contents are insignificant. Hence we may leave aside the question of whether it is a miserable Soviet forgery or merely an inaccurate and faulty retroversion of a Russian translation.

Incidentally, it is also uncertain whether the Nuremberg Tribunal actually accepted this document in evidence. In its verdict, the Tribunal based its "finding" that mass extermination of Jews by gassing was carried out in Birkenau not on this document, but on some equally dubious witness

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* We should note that here, as always, Dr. Staeglich is citing the German edition of the IMT volumes. It is not clear whether this German text of the communication Smirnov read during the proceedings (presumably, in his native tongue) is a direct transcription of some genuine or spurious document, or a retroversion from the Russian. Certainly, the version that appears in the "Report of the Soviet War Crimes Commission" which for some reason the Russians chose to present in a tin-eared and often ungrammatical German, is not the original text. To reproduce that version here would be to waste paper. Readers with an insatiable appetite for textual criticism may consult IMT, Vol. XXXIX, p. 243 (Nuremberg Document 008-USSR). The above English translation of the Smirnov document is taken from IMT, Vol. VII, p. 584, "Official text in the English language."— T.F.

123 IMT VII, 641. The document apparently was not assigned a number, as was customary, so that it possibly had not even been admitted into evidence by the court.

124 IMT XXXIX, 243; Nuremberg Doc. 008-USSR. Reitlinger mentions on page 167 of his book *Die Endlösung* a further letter from the company Topf & Sons, dated February 17, 1943, without giving the source of the documents, which, in all probability, is identical with the letter cited by the Soviets. This letter is supposed to show that "every crematorium had five tri-compartmented ovens with mechanical stoking-systems, cinder-traps, and elevators for the corpses."

testimony, in particular, that of the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, which we shall treat at length elsewhere.

More noteworthy than the document itself is the remark Smirnov made after reading it:

> I omit the next document which deals with "bath houses for special purposes" (gas chambers)...

Later in the same session, he declared, with astonishing naïveté, that the Tribunal already had sufficient knowledge of such matters, though —as we explained in our first chapter— this was hardly the case. Significantly, the court did not venture to disagree.[125]

This withholding of "facts" about a concentration camp in Soviet occupied territory, a camp of which the Nuremberg Tribunal basically knew only what could be gleaned from previous witness testimony, is simply amazing. For if one may believe Smirnov, here at last was a document that contained direct information about the legendary "gas chambers." But it never became an issue in the proceedings, nor was it mentioned in the judgment of the Tribunal. Was this "document" so patently fraudulent that one dared not present it even to these hardly impartial judges? So far as I know, it was not submitted as evidence in any of the subsequent "war crimes trials." Yet Smirnov's claim that the Birkenau "gas chambers" were disguised as shower rooms is accepted even today, and trotted out whenever the occasion presents itself.

As proof that "gas chambers" were structually part of the crematory installations, the proponents of the extermination thesis often cite a letter from the Central Construction Office of the SS and Police in [46] Auschwitz to SS-Brigadeführer Hans Kammler, Chief of Amtsgruppe C of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office. This report, dated January 29, 1943 and signed by SS-Sturmbannführer Karl Bischoff, head of the Central Construction Office in Auschwitz, reads as follows:

> Das Krematorium II wurde unter Einsatz aller verfügbaren Kräfte trotz unsagbarer Schwierigkeiten und Frostwetter bei Tagund Nachtbetrieb bis auf bauliche Kleinigkeiten fertiggestellt. Die Öffen wurden im Beisein des Herrn Oberingenieur Prüfer der ausführenden Firma, Topf u. Söhne, Erfurt, angefeuert und funktionieren tadellos. Die Eisenbetondecke des Leichenkellers konnte infolge Frosteinwirkung nocht nicht ausgeschalt werden. Die ist jodoch unbedeutend, da der Vergasungskeller hierfür benützt werden kann.
>
> Die Firma Topf u. Söhne konnte infolge Waggonsperre die Beund Entlüftungsanlage wie von der Zentralbauleitung gefordert rechtzeitig anliefern. Nach Eintreffen der Beund Entlüftungsanlage wird jedoch mit dem Einbau sofort begonnen, sodass voraussichtlich am 20.2.43 die Anlage vollständig betriebsfertig ist.
>
> The crematorium II has been completed —save for some minor constructional work— by the use of all forces available, in spite of unspeakable difficulties, the severe cold, and in 24-hour shifts. The fires were started in the ovens in the presence of Oberingenieur Pruefer, representative of the contractors of the firm of Topf and Soehne, Erfurt, and they are working most satisfactorily. The planks from the concrete ceiling of the cellar used as a mortuary [Leichenkeller] could not yet be removed on account of the frost. This is, however, not very important, as the gas chamber [Vergasungskeller] can be used for that purpose.
>
> The firm of Topf and Soehne was not able to start deliveries of the installation in time for aeration and ventilation as had been requested by the Central Building Management because of restrictions in the use of railroad cars. As soon as the installation for aeration and

[125] IMT VII, 641-642. In the report of the Soviet Commission for War Crimes, these "baths for special purposes" are also mentioned, without any corresponding documents being provided.

ventilation arrive, the installing will start so that the complete installation may be expected to be ready for use 20 February 1943.[126]

To the best of my knowledge, this document is the only one in which the term "gassing" ("Vergasung") is used in connection with the crematoria. Of course, one cannot say for certain whether the "Vergasungskeller" was actually part of the crematorium or whether it was located in another building. According to all reports, the "gassings" took place inside the crematorium buildings. Since the German text refers only to a "Vergasungskeller" ("gasification cellar" or "carburation cellar"), and not a "Gaskammer" ("gas chamber"), this could not be one of the rooms supposedly used for "extermination" which are always called "gas chambers." For this reason, it is significant that at the NMT "Concentration Camp Trial" (Case IV; U.S. *vs* Pohl), the word "Vergasungskeller" was rendered as "gas chamber" in the English translation of the document (NO-4473), as Dr. Butz has noted.[127] Ever since, the wording has been misinterpreted, even in the German language literature on our subject.

Dr. Butz gives a convincing explanation of the function of this part of the crematoria. Except for electrically powered units, which do not figure in the Auschwitz controversy, all crematoria, including those which use coal, coke, or wood as fuel, are fired with gas. According to his research, the space in which the primary fuel is converted into com[47]bustible gas before being fed into the hearth is known in German as the "Vergasungsraum" or "Vergasungskeller." Hence these terms have nothing whatsoever to do with the "gassing" of human beings.[128]

Another plausible explanation is that this room was intended for the fumigation of clothing and other personal effects, a common practice in all concentration camps. The proprietary hydrocyanic fumigant Zyklon B used for this purpose is supposed to have been used for the "extermination of the Jews" as well.

Never has there been any question that these "Vergasungskeller" were used as "gas chambers" for exterminating Jews. When it is claimed that the "gas chambers" were underground installations, they are identified with the "Leichenkeller" i.e., "corpse cellars" or subterranean mortuaries, of the crematoria.[129] The document under consideration here makes it clear, however,

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[126] Nuremberg Doc. NO-4473, here cited after Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *Auschwitz:Zeugnisse und Berichte*, p. 346, where it is reproduced in a facsimile that has been reduced in size. There one can find a totally unwarranted underlining of the word «Vergasungskeller" [gassing basement or ceflarj which, in all probabflity, is nüssing in the original, and was derived as an afterthought by the publisher of the book, or someone else who wanted to caff attention to the eidstence of the "gas chambers." In the Auschwitz testimony of Prof. Krausnick, this document is ordy cited in excerpts: *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 417.

[127] Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[128] Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.

[129] This was the case, according to the Frankfurt Auschwitz verdict, with all four crematoria in Birkenau. According to the literature, the gas chambers of two crematoria were above ground, and the writers disagree whether these were the smaller or larger crematoria. See on one hand, for example, Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 167), and on the other hand, Höss (*Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 160). In the same way there is disagreement over the designation of the Birkenau crematoria. Some number them from II to V (according to which the old crematorium in the main camp, which went out of use when the Birkenau crematoria started up, after which it was converted into an air-raid bunker for the SS hospital, is designated as number I), while others number from I to IV. As you can see, everything is perfectly clear!

that the "Leichenkeller" and the "Vergasungskeller" were two different things. The equation of "corpse cellar" with "gas chamber" has resulted from the assumption that the "scale model" on display at the Polish State Auschwitz Museum is based on building plans of the crematoria. But these plans have never been made public (They are gathering dust in the Auschwitz Museum archive under catalogue number 519). Through a fortunate set of circumstances, I came into possession of a photocopy of the plans of crematoria II and III.[130] I shall return to them later.

Since Bischoff's letter of January 29, 1943 is the only known document from the Auschwitz camp files in which the word "Vergasung" is used in connection with the crematoria, one should now realize that there is no documentary evidence for the allegation that chambers for killing people by means of lethal gas were part of the crematoria. Nor does the charge, made by various Auschwitz mythologists, that the construction of crematoria resulted from the necessity of disposing of the corpses of the thousands of people "gassed" daily at the camp find any support in the crematoria documents. Hence we may well ask the question: When did the Birkenau crematoria —or *the* Birkenau crematorium— first go into operation and how long did it or they remain in operation? We may also ask: What was the actual capacity for incineration of the individual crematoria? Only one, highly questionable document touches on this last point. With nothing solid to go by, we can only make conjectures as to the incineration capacity of the crematoria from what few clues are available. Our conclusions are very different from the estimates that so often appear in the literature on this topic.

It is usually maintained that, owing to the commencement of "mass exterminations" in 1942, four crematoria were constructed at Birkenau in the winter of 1942-43, and went into operation in the spring of 1943. This is the version attributed to Rudolf Höss.[131] Even Rassinier and Scheidl have given credence to it, on the basis of two NMT documents (NO-4401 and NO-4463).[132] These documents state that the ovens for all four crematoria were ordered either on August 3 or August 8, 1942 from [48] the firm of Topf & Söhne, installed in February, 1943, and went in operation on May 1, 1943. I have not consulted the documents mentioned by Rassinier and Scheidl, but other documents, at least in part, contradict this story.

Even the Smirnov document of February 12, 1943 does not support it. In still greater contradiction to this story is a preliminary cost estimate from the firm of Topf & Söhne for the delivery of a cremation oven to Birkenau, dated April 1, 1943.[133] A preliminary cost estimate is, of course, always given *before*

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[130] I follow the numbering system of the Auschwitz Museum, which doubtless can be taken as the "official" one. According to this system, Numbers II and III were the larger ones, Numbers IV and V, the smaller. A photocopy of the building plan of Crematorium IV and V from the archives of the Auschwitz Museum is also in my possession. It shows that no underground rooms had been planned for these buildings. The so-called "Vergasungskeller" can not have been situated there. A model of the crematorium with underground gas chambers, constructed and displayed at the Auschwitz Museum, has often been reproduced in the literature for example in Smolen (*Auschwitz 1940-1945*, p. 24).

[131] In the memoirs supposedly written by him during his imprisonment in Poland; see *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 160-161.

[132] *Was ist Wahrheit?*, pp. 93-94; *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 70-71, 99. I was unable to check the documents referred to.

[133] See the documents referred to by Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral*, p. 351.

an order is placed. On the other hand, the Central Construction Office letter of January 29, 1943 cited above leads one to the conclusion that the ovens for the crematorium II were already installed and in operation by January, 1943, which is also in contradiction to the two previously mentioned documents. Finally, in Reinhard Kühnl's collection of documents, there is a facsimile of a letter from Topf & Söhne to the Central Construction Office in Auschwitz dated April 10, 1943, in which the firm promises to repair cracks that had "recently" appeared in the "8-muffle oven of crematorium IV."[134] From this one would assume that crematorium IV was in operation by March 1943.

Part of another letter Bischoff wrote to Kammler, reproduced in Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's book *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, also seems to substantiate the current version of the inauguration of the Birkenau crematoria. The document in question is an excerpt from a purported list of finished "construction projects" presented to the Auschwitz camp administration. In it the completion dates of the crematoria are recorded as follows:

crematorium IV	on March 22, 1943,
crematorium II	on March 31, 1943,
crematorium V	on April 4, 1943,
crematorium III	on June 25, 1943.

However, the authenticity of this document must be questioned until it can be shown where it was discovered and a full text is made available. The only indication as to its origin is a rubber-stamped imprint on the upper left-hand side: "Bauleitung der Waffen-SS u. Polizei [There follow three undecipherable letters] Auschwitz." This is obviously not in accord with the usual official designation: "*Zentral*bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz."[135]

Faced with all these discrepancies and obscurities, even Gerald Reitlinger, who certainly cannot be suspected of doubting the extermination thesis, concludes that Bischoff's letter of January 29, 1943 is not a reliable source of information:

> In fact Crematorium No. 2 was not ready till March 13th. On June 13th it was still the only crematorium of the four which was actually working, and the carpentry work was incomplete. On November 6th, 1943, an order for young trees to form a green belt between the crematoria and the camp only mentions Nos. 1 and 2. The working of all four crematoria was not put to the test till May, 1944, when the massive transports arrived from Hungary.[136]

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[134] *Der Deutsche Faschismus in Quellen und Dokumenten*, p. 395. The author is apparently very close to the Communists, as can be gathered from his argumentation. Although Kühnl, in his "Faschismusforschung" [research on Fascism], assures that scholarship in the meantime has made enormous progress, he does not bring anything new to the theme discussed here.

[135] See *op. cit.*, p. 347. The model at Auschwitz stands in clear contradiction to a letter from the Auschwitz Central Construction Office published on page 378 of the same book, and which is also mentioned by Reitlinger (*op. cit.*, p. 167). In the letter a "greenbelt" is mentioned, for crematoria I and II, which in the model are designated by numbers I and II. Did the Central Construction Office not have a standard numeration for the crematoria? This is unimaginable, considering the almost proverbial preciseness of the German bureaucracy. And anyway, who plants "greenbelts" in the winter months? As for the crematoria supposedly being in use from spring 1943, they were idle due to repairs from fall 1943 to May 1943, according to the so-called Kasztner Report. See Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?,* pp. 105-106, 234; Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 71 and 99. See also Kasztner's Nuremberg Affidavit PS-2605, IMT XXXI, Iff., 6.

[136] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

[49]

According to Reitlinger, then, the crematoria were not in full operation until exactly one year later than is officially claimed today.

Given all these discrepancies, one can only say that to this day there is still no reliable evidence on the completion dates of the Birkenau crematoria. With some assurance, one may even dispute whether there really were *four* crematoria at Birkenau. In 1972, a book was published containing sketches of everyday life at various concentration camps, drawn by an inmate named Alfred Kantor. None of the many views of Birkenau he sketched shows more than *one* crematorium or *one* crematorium chimney. A person who toured the grounds of the former Birkenau camp without a guide and who is unquestionably reliable, so far as I am concerned, told me he saw the ostensible remains of crematoria II and III, but could find no trace of crematoria IV and V.

Nor is there any reliable data on the incineration capacity of the Birkenau installations. In the literature on the camp, yet another report by SS-Sturmbannführer Bischoff, dated June 28, 1943, is frequently cited. It states that the individual crematoria were capable of incinerating the following number of corpses *daily* [137]:

I	old crematorium (parent camp)	340 corpses
II	new crematorium (Birkenau)	1,440 corpses
III	new crematorium (Birkenau)	1,440 corpses
IV	new crematorium (Birkenau)	768 corpses
V	new crematorium (Birkenau)	768 corpses
Total		4,756 corpses

Where this report was discovered is not mentioned. On the subject of the incineration capacity of the crematoria one usually cites as the authority a "Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau" ("Chronology of the Events in the AuschwitzBirkenau Concentration Camp"), compiled by Danuta Czech, Custodian of the Polish State Museum at Auschwitz.[138] I have been unable to determine whether this lady was ever interned at the camp or what her source of information may be.

The estimates listed above strike one as absurd. The sheer punctiliousness of the accounting —right down to the very last corpse— is suspicious, for cremation is a complicated technical process, involving so many variables that the incineration capacity of a crematorium is not always the same.

Some indication of the actual capacity of the crematoria may be found in a letter from the firm of Topf & Söhne to the Mauthausen concentration camp. It states that in the "coke-fuelled Topf dual-muffle cremation ovens... about ten to thirty-five corpses" could be cremated "in about ten hours" and that as many could be "cremated daily without overloading the ovens" even if the "cremations took place one after the other, day and night."[139]

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Presumably, the cremation ovens manufactured by Topf & Söhne were of uniform design, and thus the same type of oven was sent to Auschwitz as to

[137] See for example Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, pp. 367, 379-380.

[138] *Hefte von Auschwitz*, Nr. 11, p. 5.

[139] See Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral*, p. 346 (Document D 132).

Mauthausen and other camps (The firm received the German patent number 861,731 for its cremation ovens).[140] The ovens might have differed slightly in the number of cremation chambers; one cannot otherwise account for any variation in their capacity.

Starting with the premise that there really were four crematoria in Birkenau, and that each crematorium contained one oven capable of cremating at most 35 corpses *per diem*, then the highest capacity of all four crematoria would be a total of 140 corpses daily. That does not seem excessive for a complex the size of Auschwitz, each component camp of which was planned for over 100,000 inmates —all the more so, since contagious diseases were rampant there.[141] Leaving aside the normal mortality rate, epidemic and other diseases undoubtedly claimed numerous victims. Dr. Scheidl has reported that, during certain periods, there were between 69 and 177 deaths each day.[142]

While these are no more than purely hypothetical estimates, they are probably closer to reality than the absurd figures given in the letter attributed to SS-Sturmbannführer Bischoff —even if one assumes that all four crematoria had 46 cremation units, as is claimed in an official bulletin of the Polish State Auschwitz Museum, dated November 29, 1977. Butz also starts from this premise, and, based on the fact that it should take at least one hour to incinerate each corpse, calculates that the total incineration capacity *per diem* would be 1,058 corpses.[143] Actually, this is still too many. Even today, in the most modern facilities, it takes from one and a half to two hours to cremate human remains.[144] One can hardly imagine that better results could have been achieved with the cremation techniques of forty years ago.

The claim that the Birkenau crematoria were built only for use in a "mass extermination program" thus proves to be totally false. In passing, I should like to remark that, according to the official publication of the Polish State Auschwitz Museum to which I have referred above, crematorium I (the old crematorium in the Auschwitz parent camp), was in operation only until July 1943, so there was no reason for Bischoff to include it in his alleged report, which is dated June 28, 1943.

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[140] An investigation of the owner of the company was conducted after the war in the Federal Republic of Germany, and dropped in 1951. See Roth, *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher?,* p. 63, and Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 62. This should establish that, regardless of all contentions to the contrary, Topf & Söhne built no crematoria combined with gas chambers. Otherwise the owners would have surely been put on trial as accessories to murder.

[141] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 117. The report of the Soviet Commission on War Crimes goes so far as to speak of 180,000 to 250,000 prisoners: IMT XXXIX, 243,252.

[142] *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, p. 99; compare also Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug...*, p. 107. In regard to the connection between crematoria built in Birkenau and the high death rate there, which was caused by many different factors, and had nothing to do with an extermination program, see Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 124ff. According to the statement of the Russian witness Prof. Alexeiev at the first Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt, there are some 40 death books from Auschwitz in the Soviet State Archives: *Mensch und Maß*, series 9/1971. They have evidently not yet been evaluated. Have they been kept back because they contradict the currently exaggerated number of deaths?

[143] Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

[144] *Der Große Brockhaus*, vol. 6 (1955), p. 631; Roth, D*er makaberste Betrug...,* p. 106. According to a report of the building Authority of Hamburg, the time required for the burning of a body in a crematory in Öjendorf is about one and a half hours.

It is worth noting that Bischoff, who resided in Bremen under his own name until his death in 1950, escaped the usual post-war harrassment.[145] He was never prosecuted as a "war criminal" nor, so far as I know, was he ever called to testify as a witness in any "war crimes trial." That is strange indeed when one considers that the former head of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office would have been an ideal witness on the Birkenau "death factory" since he supervised the building of the camp crematoria. Was someone afraid that he could have proved, maybe with documents still at his disposal, that all the allegations about the crematoria were baseless? Instead of calling Bischoff, the Nuremberg [51] International Military Tribunal made do with the testimony of a certain Wolfgang Grosch, who obviously had never laid eyes on the buildings about which he gave "evidence."[146]

Likewise, it is worth noting that in the entire post-war "re-education" literature almost nothing is said about the building plans for the crematoria. Professor Rassinier alone mentions that the plans for crematoria II through V were presented in evidence at the NMT "Wilhelmstrasse" and "Concentration Camp" trials. These plans, showing that the alleged "gas chambers" were really "corpse cellars" and shower rooms, have been consigned to oblivion, and so we may assume that Professor Rassinier's statement is correct.[147]

There can be no doubt that such building plans existed. (With their famous thoroughness, the Germans certainly would not have undertaken any building project without a well-laid plan!) In fact, as I have stated above, there are building plans for the crematoria in the archives of the Polish State Auschwitz Museum, but they are unavailable to the public.[148] Instead, visitors are shown a "scale model" of crematorium II —complete with "gas chambers"— that is purportedly based on "technical plans that were saved from destruction."[149]

As I have mentioned, I have copies of these plans, and there can be no doubt as to their origin, since they bear the official stamp of the Polish State Auschwitz Museum. These copies show that the model differs from the building plan in several important details and no provision was made for anything like a "gas chamber." The area marked "corpse cellar" which is supposed to have measured 7 meters by 30 meters (210 square meters or about 2,260 square

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[145] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *Auschuitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, p. 415. Bischoff is mentioned by Reitlinger (*op. cit.*, pp. 166-167) in connection with Nuremberg Document NO-4473 (see page 46 and n. 69 above). It is peculiar, however, that he does not include Bischoff in the fist of those "responsible for the Final Solution" (Appendix II, *op. cit.*, pp. 578ff.).

[146] Nuremberg Doc. NO-2154 (in Poliakov, Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, p. 136). See on this Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?,* pp. 91-94

[147] Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?,* p. 93; see also Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 60-61.

[148] I cannot judge if these building plans are identical with those mentioned by Rassinier. Their measurements do not always coincide with the measurements given by Rassinier. In the building plans of crematoria IV and V which are before me, there is no indication of a shower room. Indeed it is not very clear whether Rassinier saw the building plans at all, either the original or a copy. He bases his data on a journal, *Revue d'histoire mondiale* (Paris, October 1956, p. 62) and on the Nuremberg trial. (See *Was ist Wahrheit?,* pp. 93-94.) Of course it must remain open as to whether the crematoria, insofar as they were indeed constructed, were actually built according to the building plans. According to reports which I have received from Auschwitz visitors, the remains of the foundations of crematoria II and III show much smaller dimensions than those projected in the plans. To be sure we are speaking here of estimates.

[149] See Smolen, *Auschwitz 1940-1945*, pp. 23-24.

feet) would not have been suitable for the "gassings" to which some "eyewitnesses" have testified. In particular, it could not have held from 2,000 to 3,000 people at once, as has been claimed. According to the Auschwitz Museum, three smaller rooms in crematoria IV and V, with a total space of 236.78 square meters (2,550 square feet) were used as "gas chambers." The plans lend no support to this allegation, and, in any case, such use of the rooms would have been impossible because of their position. Significantly a model of these rooms has not been prepared for display to visitors of the Auschwitz Museum. In all the literature on this camp, then, there is no exact description of the "gas chambers" of crematoria IV and V.

I must cut short my discussion of this piece of evidence, since my purpose is to examine the evidence concerning the Auschwitz legend that has been presented, not documents that are —for whatever reason— being withheld, of which there are doubtless more. Our "contemporary historians" should at least take a closer look at these plans.

Even today, visitors to the Auschwitz Museum are shown a "gas chamber" in the old crematory of the parent camp. But this is —as the French scholar Robert Faurisson discovered— merely a "reconstruction" something of which Auschwitz Museum tourists are, [52] of course, not informed.[150] This "reconstruction" has little in common with the structure that actually existed. For one thing, a "gas chamber" has been made out of what were originally several rooms, as can be seen from the surviving ground-plan. The larger of these rooms is designated in the ground-plan as a "morgue" ("Leichenhalle"), a necessary adjunct to a crematorium. This is exactly the same kind of hoax the Americans perpetrated at Dachau.

Since the crematory was no longer standing when the Soviets occupied Birkenau, no one will ever know just how the previously mentioned building plans were executed —if indeed they were. Hence all we can say with absolute certainty is that the attempt to prove the existence of "gas chambers" at Birkenau from the presence there of one or more crematoria simply has not come off.

Even more questionable is the attempt to use deliveries of Zyklon B to Auschwitz as proof that the camp had "gas chambers" in which Jews were murdered with this highly toxic gas.

At the various Nuremberg trials, the prosecution submitted invoices for these deliveries as "evidence" that "gassings" had occurred. One of these invoices, dated March 13, 1944, appears in Reimund Schnabel's book *Macht ohne Moral*, as "Document 134."[151] This invoice attests to the delivery of 14 crates of Zyklon B, containing a total of 420 canisters (210 kilograms altogether), to the "Department of Disinfestation and Disinfection" at Auschwitz.[152] The task of this department —as of such units everywhere— was the disinfection of living quarters, clothing, and personal effects. According to the testimony of Arthur Breitwieser, a defendant in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, it had nothing to do with exterminating human beings. Breitwieser, who

[150] I carried on a very comprehensive exchange of letters with Professor Faurisson about this. He named Polish witnesses for his findings, among them two employees of the state Auschwitz Museum, whose names I cannot publish for understandable reasons.

[151] Report of the Soviet Commission on War Crimes: IMT XXXIX, 242. Compare also Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug...*, pp. 108ff., and Aretz, *op. cit.*, pp. 55ff.

[152] See also Pohakov, Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, p. 111 (facsimile).

for some time served as the director of this department, and so ought to be well-informed about its activities, was acquitted by the Auschwitz Trial court.[153] This is one of the many absurdities in that "trial." For the disinfectors were undoubtedly responsible for the storage and application of Zyklon B, and without their cooperation it would have been impossible to use this preparation to "gas" Jews.

Rassinier points out the well-known fact that Zyklon B had been used by the German Army since 1924, and during World War II it was employed as a disinfectant in every branch of the service and in all the concentration camps. Invoices have also been found for deliveries of Zyklon B to the Oranienburg and Bergen-Belsen camps, where —as has been proved— gas chambers for exterminating human beings did not exist.[154]

One cannot deny that this preparation could have been used to exterminate people. Of course, that does not mean that it was. After all, nobody could be accused of being a murderer simply because he owned an axe, an instrument extraordinarily well-suited to homicide. Such an accusation would be laughed out of any court. But to "prove" the ex[53]istence of "gas chambers" at Birkenau —something for which real evidence is utterly lacking— no argument, however idiotic, is disdained, even by certain "scholars."

For example, Professor Krausnick, in a footnote to his Auschwitz Trial deposition, cites an NMT document (NO-4465) that is so ambiguous that most of the other writers on this subject do not venture to mention it. This is an order that the Central Construction Office of Auschwitz allegedly placed with the Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH, an SS industrial firm near Auschwitz, for the manufacture of "three gas-tight towers... of exactly the same dimensions and type as the towers previously supplied"* ("drei gasdichte Türme... genau nach den Ausmassen und der Art der bisher angelieferten Türme").[155] One asks oneself in vain what these towers might have to do with "gas chambers" —a question Krausnick, of course, does not answer. None of the "eyewitnesses" to the "gas chambers" has anything to say about such towers.

In this order, dated March 31, 1943, there is also a reference to the filling of another order, placed on March 6, 1943, for a "gas door 100 x 192 cm for corpse cellar I of crematorium III... of exactly the same type and size as the cellar door of the crematorium opposite it, crematorium II, with a peep-hole made of double-strength 8-mm glass, with rubber gasket and [metal?] cap" ("Gastür 100/192 für Leichenkeller I des Krematoriums II... genau nach Art und Mass der Kellertür des gegenüberliegenden Krematoriums II mit Guckloch aus doppeltem 8-mm-Glas mit Gummidichtung und Beschlag").

Could this be the famous peep-hole through which the SS physicians who allegedly supervised the "gassing" of inmates are said to have observed the death-throes of the victims? Probably not. Like the other documents of its

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[153] Naumann, *Auschwitz*, pp. 69ff., 272.

[154] Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?,* p. 94; Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug...*, pp. 86ff.

* My translation. In the NMT translation of this document, the phrase "drei gasdichte Türme" is rendered into English as "three gas-tight chambers," but the translator was honest —or puzzled —enough to add the word "Türme" in brackets (NMT, Vol. V, p. 622). The "photocopy in the Institut für Zeitgeschichte" quoted by Krausnick is presumably a reproduction of an alleged German original (Prosecution Exhibit 660 in the NMT "Concentration Camp Trial" [Case IV; U.S. vs Pohl]). —T.F.

[155] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, p. 417, footnote 226; Nuremberg Doc. Nr. 4465.

kind, this order really proves nothing. At that time, gas-tight doors were not uncommon, since every cellar had to double as an air raid shelter. The peep-holes in these doors were a source of light and a means of observing the outside. Through such a peep-hole it would have been quite impossible to view the whole interior of a "gas chamber" especially if it were as large as these rooms are usually claimed to have been (i.e., had a capacity of 3,000 or more people). Air raid shelters had to be secure not only against explosives, but against gas as well. Considering that Birkenau had no other fortified places, it would only have been common sense to make the cellars of the crematoria into air raid shelters. Perhaps these "gas-tight towers" were intended as some kind of aboveground shelter.
[54]

In nearly all the collections of documents on Auschwitz, papers containing only routine information about the billeting and employment of inmates, their transfer to other camps, and similar matters are adduced as evidence of the alleged gassings. The commentators explain that seemingly innocuous words and phrases in these papers really denote the "gassing" of inmates. For such conjectures there is not the slightest factual basis. Not only does the term "special treatment" which we have already discussed (see p. 42 above), play a role in this connection, but phrases like "given special accomodation" ("gesondert untergebracht"), which is used in a wire from the Commandant's Office at Auschwitz in regard to a newly arrived group of Jews, are also interpreted as "murdered in the gas chambers."[156] Similarly, in their commentary on a list of prisoners being transferred from Monowitz to Birkenau, Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner state that the persons listed had been designated for "gassing" even though the document itself does not contain the slightest indication of that.[157]

All these attempts to read such things into both vaguely and unequivocally worded documents shamelessly capitalize on a critical in eptitude, gullibility, and prejudice that have resulted from years of brainwashing. As any person with the capacity to think must admit, these "documents" on the alleged gassings have no value whatsoever as evidence. Even the *fait accompli* of some of them having been accepted in evidence at the Nuremberg trials cannot alter this fact. Consider the transfer list mentioned above, which was used in the NMT "IG-Farben Trial" (Document NI-14997). No historian who holds to the traditional scholarly methods of researching and evaluating sources would accept a mode of argumentation based on the premise that documents can be made to serve a desired end by the use of unwarranted assumptions and arbitrary interpretations. It is hardly necessary to go into every little detail of such documents, without which the legend of the "extermination of the Jews" would have gone nowhere.

What has just been said applies equally to the exhibits of clothing and human hair from concentration camps, which in the post-war "reeducation" literature are frequently invoked as proof of the "extermination of the Jews."[158]

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[156] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

[157] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 354.

[158] Two typical examples for the form and content of such documents, the authenticity of which is extremely questionable, are given by Udo Walendy in *Die Methoden der Umerziehung* [The Methods of Re-education] (*op. cit.*, pp. 34ft). Walendy's treatment is very instructive. I had

It is claimed that these articles came from prisoners who had been "gassed" even though that cannot be so much as inferred from any document. What is never mentioned is that, for hygienic reasons, the hair was cut off *all* incoming prisoners before they were sent to the showers. Afterwards, they were given a uniform to wear. Their street clothes had to be turned over to the authorities, as is standard procedure in all prisons.

Our survey of official documents from recent German history shows that there is no documentary evidence that proves the existence of "gas chambers" in Birkenau or a plan to "exterminate the Jews" or that would even cause one to suspect there might be something to such charges. It [55] also shows that the statement recently made by one of the vilest members of the Nuremberg lynching party, the Jewish-American prosecutor Robert M.W. Kempner, that the "historical assessments" on the "extermination of the Jews" are based "almost exclusively on official German documents of the Hitler régime that have been preserved by an experienced bureaucracy" is totally unfounded.[159] Kempner's statement contradicts facts that must be well known to the man himself. The famous "Wannsee Protocol" which he may have had in mind when he made his remarks, has proved to be —at least in part— a crude forgery. We may pass over the recent conjectures that Kempner was responsible for that forgery —it was he who "discovered" the "document." The validity of this charge cannot be established, though Kempner's general conduct as chief of the American prosecution team at Nuremberg might seem enough to warrant it.

The only document from the German official files in which the term "gassing" ("Vergasung") is used in connection with the Birkenau crematoria (Nuremberg Document NO-4473; see p. 46 above), owes its interpretation as "proof" that a "gas chamber" for killing Jews existed at Auschwitz to a mistranslation. As Butz has shown, the word "Vergasungskeller" ("carburation cellar") was rendered into English as "gas chamber." That even German scholars have adopted this misinterpretation testifies to how far removed our historical scholarship is from a free and objective examination of "Auschwitz" and everything that word connotes.

Since it has been established that the Auschwitz Myth does not rest on official documents, let us see in the following pages what other "evidence" has been prepared for us.

Speeches and Other Public Statement by Political Leaders of the Third Reich

As soon as one turns to the topic of the "extermination of the Jews" one finds that fragments of speeches made by the leading political figures of the Third Reich, in particular, Hitler and Himmler, are frequently cited as evidence. The rather strong language used with regard to the Jews in certain passages of these speeches is simply taken at face value, and, therefore, assumes an importance it really does not deserve. Often such passages are taken out of context, and their significance in relation to the whole text ignored. That has

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similar experiences when searching for documents in the Nuremberg State Archive and the Federal Archives in Coblenz.

[159] Kempner in the Jewish German language newspaper, *Der Aufbau*, New York, November 14, 1975, p. 6.

also been done with spoken and written statements the German leaders of the period made on subjects other than the Jewish Question.

Especially in the case of Hitler, such statements were made largely in response to the numerous threats to exterminate the German people uttered by Allied leaders and Jewish spokesmen. Perhaps the most notorious of the latter is Theodore Nathan Kaufmann. In a book entitled [56] *Germany Must Perish* (1941), he expounded a plan to wipe out the German people by sterilizing German men and women.[160] Even better known is the "Morgenthau Plan." Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and a personal advisor to President Roosevelt, thought starvation and economic strangulation were the best means of getting rid of the German people, and Roosevelt himself endorsed this plan.[161] Nor should one forget that it was the renegade German Professor Friedrich Alexander Lindemann —later dubbed Lord Cherwell— who devised the plan on which the carpet bombing that annihilated countless German civilians was largely based.[162] Finally, the Soviet "expert on international law" A.N. Trainin, set forth a plan aimed at wiping out the German "ruling class" and intelligentsia. His plan led to the London Charter, the basis for the "jurisdiction" of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, which actually did condemn German leaders to death and imprisonment.[163] With the exception of Kaufmann's scheme, all these plans were at least partially executed. If they were not carried out in full, it was more for practical than humanitarian reasons.

Besides these very concrete extermination plans, which had no counterpart on the German side, numerous general statements were made along the same lines. Only a few of these will be mentioned here.

Perhaps the most famous exhortations to murder are those of Stalin's Jewish propagandist Ilya Ehrenburg, who expressed such sentiments as the following:*

> No longer do we say: "Good morning" or "Good night." In the morning we say: "Kill a German" and in the evening: "Kill a German."
>
> Books, love, the stars no longer matter. The only thing that matters is to kill the Germans. To kill them all. To bury them... For us there is nothing more beautiful than German corpses. "Kill a German!" —this is what the old mother begs of you. "Kill a German!" —this is what a child implores. Germans are not human beings. Germans are biped animals, disgusting creatures, beasts. Germans are amoebae, soulless microbes, but equipped with machines, guns, mortars.
>
> If you have killed one German, kill another —nothing gladdens us more than German corpses.[164]

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[160] On this, Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?,* pp. 116, 237ff.; Roth, *Was hätten wir Väter wissen müssen?*, part 2, pp. 144ff.; Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 3, pp. 200ff., and vol. 5, pp. 116ff. A translation of the Kaufman murder plan appeared in 1977 in the publication *Deutscher Arbeitskreis Witten*.

[161] According to Freda Utley, a well-known American journalist, we are dealing here with the greatest attempt at genocide of modern times. See *Kostspielige Rache*, pp. 16-17. For the Morgenthau Plan see Keppler, *Tod über Deutschland: Der Morgenthauplan*; Schrenck-Notzing, *Charakterwäsche*, pp. 78ff.; Härtle, *Amerikas Krieg gegen Deutschland*, pp. 304ff.; Roth, *Was hätten wir Väter wissen müssen?*, part 2, pp. 148ff.

[162] See Roth, *Was hätten wir Väter wissen müssen?*, part 2, pp. 96; David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden*. Rumpf comprehensively documents the bombing war in his book, *Das war der Bombenkrieg*.

[163] Grimm, *Mit offenem Visier*, pp. 257f.; idem, *Nation Europa*, Nr. 8/1956, p. 35; Roth, *Was hätten wir Väter wissen müssen?* part 2, pp. 153ff.

* Unless a source is given in the notes, the English translations of the quotations in this section are my own. —T.F.

That Ehrenburg's exhortations to murder were not without their effect is well known. What is not so well known is these homicidal messages were translated into English for the benefit of the onward marching "Christian Soldiers."[165]

To be sure, his incitements to murder appeared at a time when the war was at its greatest intensity. But long before the outbreak of war threats to exterminate the German people were being broadcast around the world. That is something, by the way, which one ought to take into account when considering the question of "war guilt."[166]

As early as January 1934, Vladimir Jabotinsky, the founder of Revi[57]sionist Zionism, declared in the Jewish paper *Tatscha Retsch* : "Our Jewish interests require the final destruction of Germany; the Germans, each and every one of them, are a danger to us." Likewise, on May 24, 1934, the publisher of *The American Hebrew*, a leading Zionist, reportedly told the American publicist Robert E. Edmondson that Jewry was "going to bring a war on Germany." And on April 16, 1936, the *Youngstown Jewish Times* (Youngstown, Ohio), commented that after the next war there would no longer be a Germany. It predicted that "on signal from Paris" France and Belgium, as well as the peoples of Czechoslovakia, would be set in motion to attack the "German colossus" and, in a "deadly pincer-movement" sever Prussia from Bavaria, thus bringing Germany to extinction. (The only difference between this fantasy and the reality of post-war Germany is that the new borders were set elsewhere and the German people are not yet extinct, though they certainly seem to be heading in that direction.) Not long after this article was published, *The American Hebrew*, in its issue of April 30, 1937, expressed the same idea in a more general way when it stated that Germany deserved to be eliminated from the family of nations. This statement was echoed by the British newspaper *The People*, which, on September 3, 1939, described the German people as the "mad dog of Europe" and demanded their destruction. On the very same day, Churchill declared in the House of Commons that this war was England's war and its aim the destruction of Germany, ending his outburst with the paradoxical battle-cry: "Onward Christian Soldiers!"

No German statesman ever spoke of another people in such terms as the British hate-monger Lord Vansittart used against the Germans when attempting to justify the terror bombings: "The only good Germans are dead Germans, so let the bombs fall!"

Those bombs fell, exactly as intended, on women, children, and old people alike. This is the background against which one must consider the angry statements made by German leaders. Although they have inevitably been associated with the "extermination of the Jews" these statements were mostly made in response to a torrent of hatred against the German Government and threats to annihilate the German people that was unleashed even before the war. *Wie man in den Wald hineinruft, so schallt es heraus*. * What is more, some

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[164] Quoted after Aretz, *op. cit*., p. 340; see also Erich Kein, *Verbrechen am deutschen Volk*, p. 171.

[165] For example in *The Tempering of Russia*, Alfred Knopf, New York, pp. 352f.

[166] All following quotations come from Friedrich Lenz, Zauber um Dr. Schacht, pp. 131f., 149f.

* "As ye sow, so shall you reap"; literally, "As you shout into the woods, so it echoes forth." —T.F.

of the remarks attributed to the German leaders are either spurious or have been misrepresented.

There is a vast difference between words and deeds. The atrocities committed against Germans before, during, and after the war have been impeccably documented. They even received publicity at the time they occurred.[167] The same cannot be said of the alleged murder of the [58] Jews — especially since the most prominent Jews, leaders of the Jewish intellectual élite and political leadership, who would have been the first victims of an actual extermination plan, survived internment in Auschwitz and other concentration camps.[168]

But enough of these preliminary remarks. We shall now examine the relatively few declarations relating to Germany's supposed ambition to "exterminate the Jews" that come directly from German leaders of the time. As we shall see, their statements were no worse than any made against the Germans by the other side.

Adolf Hitler

Hitler quotations are usually introduced with the claim that Hitler announced his goal of exterminating the Jews by means of lethal gas in *Mein Kampf*. To support this claim, one cites the following sentences from his book:

> Hätte man zu Kriegsbeginn und während des Krieges einmal zwölfoder fünfzehntausend dieser hebräischen Volksverderber so unter Giftgas gehalten, wie Hunderttausende unserer allerbesten Arbeiter aus allen Schichten und Berufen es im Felde erdulden mussten, dann wäre das Millionenopfer der Front nicht vergeblich gewesen. Im Gegenteil: Zwölftausend Schurken zur rechten Zeit beseitigt, hätte vielleicht einer Million ordentlicher, für die Zukunft wertvoller Deutscher das Leben gerettet.
>
> If at the beginning of the War and during the War twelve or fifteen thousand of these Hebrew corruptors of the people had been held under poison gas, as happened to hundreds of thousands of our very best German workers in the field, the sacrifice of millions at the front would not have been in vain. On the contrary: twelve thousand scoundrels eliminated in time might have saved the lives of a million real Germans, valuable for the future.[169]

These statements are found in Chapter 15 of Volume II, which is entitled "The Right of Emergency Defence." Here Hitler was attacking international Marxism, in Germany then led primarily by Jews. He was not attacking the Jews *per se*, still less advocating their general destruction. These lines, written in

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[167] That those who were born after the war know little or nothing about the crimes of the Allies stems from the fact that these have been and continue to be veiled in a cloak of official silence to the present day. Wherever possible, official documentation of Allied war crimes is kept under lock and key. On this see the very informative preface in Erich Kern's book *Verbrechen am deutschen Volk*. The recent efforts of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany to prevent the publication of documentation on the fate of the German prisoners of war in the Soviet Union and other enemy countries deserve to be widely publicized. On this see, for example, *Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung*, Nr. 40/1974 of Oct. 4, 1974, p. 1; *Das Ostpreußenblatt*, issue number 43/1974 of Oct. 26, 1974, p. 1; *Oldenburgische Volkszeitung* of Sept. 10, 1974.

[168] One need only be reminded of well-known names like Benedikt Kautsky (Austrian socialist leader); Erik Blumenfeld (Christian Democratic Union Bundestag Representative); Simon Wiesenthal (Director of the so-called Jewish Documentation Centre in Vienna), as well as of such well-known witnesses from the Auschwitz trial as Hermann Langbein (general secretary of the so-called Auschwitz Committee); Dr. Otto Wolken (physician in Vienna), and the former Polish Minister President Cyrankiewicz, all of whom are full or part Jews. Another very prominent example is the member of the Budapest Judenrat, Dr. Reszö Kasztner, who was assassinated in Israel (!) after the war.

[169] Quoted from *Mein Kampf*, vol. II, Chapter 15.

1925, refer exclusively to a situation that existed at the end of World War I. From them one cannot infer that Hitler had some "general idea" of exterminating, let along gassing, the Jews, as Karl Dietrich Bracher, for example, would have us believe.[170] To interpret them objectively, one must bear in mind that Hitler is referring to the past, and, moreover, is discussing a specific situation. These remarks can be explained only in terms of Hitler's view of why Germany collapsed at the end of World War I, as well as his own experience of gas warfare (which the English, by the way, initiated).[171] They should be taken as an emotional outburst, not as an embryonic plan. Indeed, *Mein Kampf* is for the most part more propagandistic than programmatic.[172]

This passage from Hitler's book recalls the humanitarian sentiments [59] that Kurt Tucholsky, a Jew, expressed towards members of the German middle-class who did not share his peculiar "pacifism":

> Möge das Gas in die Spielstuben eurer Kinder schleichen. Mögen sie langsam unsinken, die Püppchen. Ich wünsche der Frau des Kirchenrats und des Chefredakteurs und der Mutter des Bildhauers und der Schwester des Bankiers, dass sie einen bitteren qualvollen Tod finden, alle zusammen.
>
> May the gas creep into the play-rooms of your children. They should drop dead slowly, the little dolls. I'd like to see the wife of the churchwarden and the editorin-chief and the mother of the sculptor and the sister of the banker die a bitter, excruciating death, all of them, together.[173]

Now, we certainly are not charging that Tucholsky planned or preached the murder-by-gassing of the German people. Yet it would be interesting to see how those who accuse Hitler, on the basis of the passage quoted above, of promoting the murder-by-gassing of the Jewish people would react to Tucholsky's far more drastic outburst.

The first remarks in which Hitler specifically uses the words "annihilation" ("Vernichtung") and "eradication" ("Ausrottung") in relation to "the Jews" or "Jewry" were made in 1939. They were a reaction to world Jewry's anti-German campaign, which, by that time, had reached a pitch of frenzy, as shown at the beginning of the this section. In particular, Hitler's Reichstag speech of January 30, 1939 is often cited. There he declared, *inter alia*:

> Wenn es dem internationalen Finanzjudentum innerhalb und ausserhalb Europas gelingen sollte, die Völker noch einmal in einen Weltkrieg zu stürzen, dann wird das Ergebnis nicht die Bolschewisierung der Erde und damit der Sieg des Judentums sien, sondern die Vernichtung der jüdischen Rasse in Europa.
>
> If international finance-Jewry, inside and outside Europe, should once again succeed in plunging the nations into a world war, the result will not be the Bolshevization of the earth, and with that the victory of Jewry, but rather the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.[174]

Obviously, this statement is nothing more than a response to the war threats that were constantly being made by influential Zionists. It was meant as an admonition to those war-mongers. Heinrich Härtle interprets this text as a

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[170] Bracher, *op. cit.*, p. 461.

[171] As is well known, Hitler was temporarily blinded by the effects of British poison gas. See *Mein Kampf*, vol. I, ch. 7.

[172] After coming to power, Hitler the statesman was in some regards inconsistent with this bible of National Socialism, for example, in his relations with France.

[173] *Die Weltbühne*, XXIII, Nr. 30 (july 26, 1927), pp. 152f.; here quoted after Aretz, *op. cit.,* p. 106.

[174] Domarus, *Hitler: Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945*, vol. 2, p. 1058. See also Nuremberg Doc. PS-2663, IMT XXXI, 65.

sign of Hitler's deep committment to peace. He believes Hitler did not intend to cause a war in order to annihilate the Jews, but raised the spectre of their annihilation in order to prevent a war.[175] In using the word "annihilation" Hitler was only borrowing from the vocabulary of his Zionist foes. Even if one rejects Härtle's interpretation, one must not jump to the conclusion that the opposite interpretation is correct. As noted above, angry words were part of the vocabulary of the times. The rhetoric of Churchill and Roosevelt was no less vehement.

When quoted in context —as they seldom are— these remarks show that Hitler was not really suggesting the physical annihilation of the Jews. This is how he continued his speech:

[60]

> Denn die Zeit der propagandistischen Wehrlosigkeit der nichtjüdischen Völkler ist zu Ende. Das nationalsozialistische Deutschland und das faschistische Italien besitzen jene Einrichtungen, die es gestatten, wenn notwendig, die Welt über das Wesen einer Frage aufzuklären, die vielen Völkern instinktiv bewusst, nur wissenschaftlich unklar ist.
>
> Augenblicklich mag das Judentum in gewissen Staaten seine Hetze betreiben unter dem Schutz einer dort in seinen Händen befindlichen Presse, des Films, der Rundfunkpropaganda, der Theatre, der Literatur usw. Wenn es diesem Volk aber noch einmal gelingen sollte, die Millionenmassen der Völker in einen für diese gänzlich sinnlosen und nur jüdischen Interessen dienenden Kampf zu hetzen, dann wird sich die Wirksamkeit einer Aufklärung äussern, der in Deutschland allein schon in wenigen Jahren das Judentum restlos erlegen ist.
>
> For the non-Jewish peoples are no longer without the weapon of propaganda. Both National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy have the equipment necessary to enlighten the world about the nature of a problem that many nations instinctively recognize, though they may lack a scientific view of it.
>
> For the time being, the Jews may carry on their agitations in certain states under the cover of the press, cinema, radio, theatre, literature, etc., which are in their hands. But if the Jewish nation should once again succeed in goading millions of people from other nations into a totally senseless war, to serve only Jewish interests, the efficacy of the kind of enlightenment that in just a few years utterly defeated the Jews in Germany will become manifest.[176]

Thus Hitler's threat was that if another world war broke out, Zionism would be *politically* eliminated —by disclosing to the peoples of the world its role in that catastrophe. He started from the premise —and we may leave aside the question whether rightly or wrongly— that the preservation of world peace depended largely on the stance of international Jewry, which did indeed have an extraordinarily strong influence on nearly all governments.[177]

Even after the outbreak of war, Hitler continued to make such threats. These, too, are cited in the literature on our topic as "proof" of his ambition to exterminate the Jewish people, when, perhaps, they should be viewed in terms of his repeated attempts to bring the western Allies to their senses.

For example, on January 30, 1941, Hitler allegedly threatened that, if another world war broke out, all European Jewry "would be done for" ("im Falle eines neuen Weltkrieges seine Rolle ausgespielt"). Likewise, in a speech delivered on January 30, 1942, he reportedly declared that the war would

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[175] Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, p. 164.

[176] Domarus, *Hitler: Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945*, vol. 2, p. 1058. See also Nuremberg Doc. PS-2663, IMT XXXI, 65.

[177] See Henry Ford, *The International Jew* and Gary Allen, *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*. According to the Forrestal Diaries (pp. 121ff.), during the war British Prime Minister Chamberlain told the American Ambassador Kennedy: "America and World jewry have forced England into the war." (Cited after Hoggan, *Der erzwungene Krieg*, p. 687).

result in the "extermination of Jewry in Europe" ("die Vernichtung des Judentums in Europa"). And, on February 24, 1942, he is supposed to have "prophesied" that through this war Aryan man would not be exterminated, but the Jew extirpated ("durch diesen Krieg nicht die arische Menschheit vernichtet, sondern der Jude ausgerottet").[178] In other speeches, Hitler made similar utterances, but they are really not worth quoting.

None of these remarks are particularly shocking when compared with the strongly worded statements Allied leaders and influential Zionists made along the same lines. As I have said, it was then customary to use [61] strong language against one's opponents. In any case, Hitler's "prophesies" about the eradication of the Jews had scarcely been fulfilled at that time, or even at the end of the war.[179] More importantly, in all of Hitler's speeches and statements one cannot find a single reference to the alleged homicidal role of the concentration camps, in particular, Auschwitz-Birkenau, purportedly the centre of "systematic mass extermination of the Jews."

In the final analysis, all the allegations regarding Hitler's "extermination policy" are at odds with a statement he is said to have made towards the end of the war, on February 13, 1945:

> Wenn ich den Krieg gewinne, so mache ich der jüdischen Herrschaft in der Welt ein Ende, ich versetze ihr den Todesstoss. Und wenn ich diesen Krieg verliere, so werden sie dieses Sieges nicht froh. Denn die Juden werden darüber den Kopf verlieren. Sie werden ihre Überheblichkeit bis zu einem solchen Grade steigern, dass sie selbst die Reaktion herausforden.
>
> If I win the war, I will put an end to Jewish domination of the world. I will deal it a death-blow. And if I lose this war, they will not rejoice in their victory. It will go to their heads. They will increase their arrogance to such a degree that they themselves will provoke a reaction.[180]

These remarks are extremely interesting. If the "re-education" literature is to be believed, the Jews in the German sphere of influence had already been largely exterminated. According to this statement, however, Hitler planned merely to end "Jewish *domination* of the world" —something quite different from physically destroying the entire race. Thus even as the war drew to an end, the "extermination of the Jews" could not have been Hitler's goal. This is also evident from the text of Hitler's Political Testament that was published by the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg Document 3569-PS). Among other things, this document states:

> Ich habe aber auch keinen Zweifel darüber gelassen, dass wenn die Völker Europas wieder nur als Aktienpakete dieser internationalen Geldund Finanzverschwörer angesehen werden, dann auch jenes Volk zur Verantwortung gezogen werden wird, das der eigentlich Schuldige an diesem mörderischen Ringen ist: das internationale Judentum! Ich habe weiter keinen darüber im Unklaren gelassen, dass dieses Mal nicht nur Millionen Kinder von Europäern der arischen Völker verhungern werden, nicht nur Millionen erwachsener Männer den Tod erleiden und nicht nur Hunderttausende an Frauen und Kindern in der Städten verbrannt und zu Tode bombardiert werden dürften, ohne dass der eigentlich Schulidige, wenn auch durch humanere Mittel, seine Schuld zu bussen hat.
>
> I also made it clear that, if the nations of Europe were again to be regarded merely as shares to be bought and sold by these international conspirators of money and finance, then that nation which is the real guilty party in this murderous struggle —international Jewry— would be called to account. Moreover, I made it clear to everybody that this time not only would millions of children in the European Aryan nations starve to death, not only

[178] All citations from Adam, *Judenpolitik im 3. Reich*, pp. 304, 316; see also Domarus, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 1663, 1829 and 1844. See also the Krausnick references, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

[179] See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 10 and 205ff.

[180] Cited after Wucher, *Eichmanns gab es viele*, p. 253.

> would millions of grown men meet their death, and not only would millions of women and children be burnt and bombed to death in the cities, but the real culprit would have to pay for his guilt as well, even though by more humane means than war.[181]

[62]

Two things are worth noting here. First, even shortly before his death Hitler apparently knew nothing about a mass extermination of Jews in "death camps" for otherwise he would have worded his Political Testament differently. Second, if Hitler aimed at exterminating the Jews and this had actually been accomplished, it would have been characteristic of him to boast triumphantly of the accomplishment. But he only says that the "real guilty party in this murderous struggle" "international Jewry" —but not "the Jews" as such— would have to pay for its guilt, "even though by more humane means than war."[182] Thus Hitler was not referring to any possibility of physically eliminating the Jewish people, but anticipating that the Jewish leader-stratum would receive some kind of punishment, which, in his own words, would be more "humane" than the slaughter of European soldiers and civilians in the war. His remarks could apply to the period after the victory for which he may still have entertained some hope. If so, it should be understood as a warning to the Jewish leaders and an assignment for his successors.

Heinrich Himmler

After Hitler's speeches, it is mainly the speeches of Himmler in which one seeks to find circumstantial evidence for the alleged racially motivated murder of the Jews. Speeches and excerpts of speeches of his supposedly relating to this subject have been published with a commentary by Agnes F. Peterson and Bradley F. Smith under the rather sensationalistic title *Heinrich Himmler: Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945*.* Of course, it is absurd to call a speech delivered before a relatively large audience "secret." Nor is it known whether Himmler ever designated any of his speeches so. Evidently the title was chosen in the hope of selling more copies of the book.

According to the "Remarks on the Edition" at the end of the book these speeches were discovered in the files of the "Personal Staff of the Reichsführer-SS" which the Americans seized as war booty. Today they are reportedly in the Bundesarchiv in Coblenz. Before they were returned, they were microfilmed. Whether they are entirely genuine is open to question.

Himmler was in the habit of formulating his speeches as he went along, using notes that he had written down himself, which often consisted of no more than a dozen phrases. According to Peterson and Smith, there are only four or five completely prepared texts among the documents published in their collection, but they do not specify which ones. From the end of 1942, Himmler's speeches were frequently —though not always— phonographically recorded with two [63] machines. These devices are said to have worked poorly, leaving big gaps in the recordings. Beginning in 1943, SS-Untersturmführer Werner Alfred Venn was solely responsible for making and keeping the transcripts of Himmler's speeches. It is not clear just who had this

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[181] IMT XLI, 548-549.

[182] This testimony has been incorrectly cited in the English translation: Compare Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 193. The retranslation in *Der Jahrhundert-Betrug* is also unfortunately inexact.

* *Heinrich Himmler: Secret Speeches, 1933-1945.* Although this volume was compiled and edited by two Americans, there does not seem to be an English-language edition of it. —T.F.

duty before. Venn is supposed to have taken down and typed out the speeches —even making "corrections" (!) in the text, but changing the meaning "barely or not at all."[183]

One can well imagine the possibilities for error involved in the preparation of these "documents." What is more, the American officials who "evaluated" the staff files of the Reichsführer-SS had ample opportunities to manipulate the papers, and probably took advantage of them, for some of Himmler's speeches were presented in evidence at the Nuremberg IMT trial.[184]

Peterson and Smith claim that Venn sent his transcripts of the speeches to Himmler, who then revised them slightly.[185] Nobody asks whether this would have made any sense. If these were "secret speeches" there was little possibility of their ever being published. Moreover, it is doubtful whether Himmler had the time to go over his speeches carefully. Since they had already been delivered, that must have seemed a useless undertaking. How Peterson and Smith discovered these intimate details is a mystery.

There is considerable doubt as to whether the versions of the speeches that were presented to a horrified world after the fall of the Third Reich were identical with speeches Himmler may actually have delivered. Nevertheless, we are bound to discuss here those passages which are cited in support of the extermination thesis. Although they are constantly used to "substantiate" the charge that murders-by-gassing occurred at Auschwitz, they contain no mention of Auschwitz or any other alleged "extermination camp."

Most frequently cited is an address Himmler delivered on October 4, 1943 before a gathering of SS-Grappenführer at Posen. Though basically a survey of the situation at the beginning of the fifth year of the war, it contains a discussion —relatively brief— of "The Clearing out of the Jews" ("Die Judenevakuierung"). At any rate, that is the heading this passage of the transcript was given when it was presented in evidence at the Nuremberg IMT trial (Nuremberg Document 1919-PS). According to this document, Himmler declared:

> Ich will hier vor Ihnen in aller Offenheit auch ein ganz schweres Kapital erwähnen. Unter uns soll es einmal ganz offen ausgesprochen sein, und trotzdem werden wir in der Öfentlichkeit nie darüber reden... Ich meine jetzt die Judenevakuierung, die Ausrottung des jüdischen Volkes. Es gehört zu den Dingen, die man leicht ausspricht – "Das jüdische Volk wird ausgerottet" sagt ein jeder Parteigenosse, "ganz klar, steht in unserem Programm, Ausschaltung der Juden, Ausrottung, machen wir." Und dann kommen sie alle an, die braven 80 Millionen Deutschen, und jeder hat seinen anständigen Juden. Es ist ja klar, die anderen sind Schweine, aber dieser eine is ein prima Jude. Von allen, die so reden, hat keiner [64] zugesehen, keiner hat es durchgestanden. Von euch werden die meisten wissen, was es heisst, wenn 100 Leichen beisammenliegen, wenn 500 daliegen oder wenn 1000 daliegen. Dies durchgehalten zu haben und dabei – abgesehen von Ausnahmen menschlicher Schwäche – anständig geblieben zu sein, das hat uns hart gemacht. Dies ist ein niemals geschriebenes und niemals zu schreibendes Ruhmesblatt unserer Geschichte, denn wir wissen, wie schwer wir uns täten, wenn wir heute noch in jeder Stadt – bei den Bombenangriffen, bei den Lasten und bei den Entbehrungen des Krieges – noch die Juden als Geheimsaboteure, Agitatoren und Hetzer hätten. Wir würden wahrscheinlich jetzt in das

[183] See Smith&Peterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 251f.

[184] Especially his speech before the SS leaders in Posen on October 4, 1943, IMT XXIX,122ff. By the way, this speech is not printed in Smith and Peterson. There it is mentioned only briefly, in the preface to Himmler's 2nd Posen speech (October 6, 1943) and in a list of speeches at the end of the book (see pp. 162, 273, *op. cit.*).

[185] Smith and Peterson, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

Stadium des Jahres 1916/17 gekommen sein, wenn die Juden noch im deutschen Volkskörper sässen.

Die Reichtümer, die sie hatten, haben wir ihnen abgenommen. Ich habe einen strikten Befehl gegeben, den SS-Obergruppenführer Pohl durchgeführt hat, dass diese Reichtümer selbstverständlich restlos an das Reich abgeführt wurden. Wir haben uns nichts davon genommen. Einzelne, die sich verfehlt haben, werden gemäss einem von mir zu Anfang gegebenen Befehl bestraft, der androhte: Wer sich auch nur eine Mark davon nimmt, der ist des Todes. Eine Anzahl SS-Männer – es sind nicht viele – haben sich dagegen verfehlt und sie werden des Todes sein, gnadenlos. Wir hatten das moralische Recht, wir hatten die Pflicht gegenüber unserem Volk, dieses Volk, das uns umbringen wollte, umzubringen. Wir haben aber nicht das Recht, uns auch nur mit einem Pelz, mit einer Uhr, mit einer Mark oder mit einer Zigarette oder mit sonst etwas zu bereichern. Wir wollen nicht am Schluss, weil wir einen Bazillus ausrotten, an dem Bazillus krank werden und sterben. Ich werde niemals zusehen, dass hier auch nur eine kleine Fäulnisstelle entsteht oder sich festzetzt. Wo sie sich bilden sollte, werden wir sie gemeinsam ausbrennen. Insgesamt aber können wir sagen, dass wir diese schwerste Aufgabe in Liebe zu unserem Volk erfüllt haben. Und wir haben keinen Schaden in unserem Innern, in unserem Charakter daran genommen.

I also want to talk to you, quite frankly, on a very grave matter. Among ourselves it should be mentioned quite frankly, and yet we will never speak of it publicly... I mean the clearing out of the Jews, the extermination of the Jewish race. It's one of those things it is easy to talk about —"The Jewish race is being exterminated" says one party member, "that's quite clear, it's in our program —elimination of the Jews, and we're doing it, exterminating them." And then they come, 80 million worthy Germans, and each one has his decent Jew. Of course the others are vermin, but this one is an A-1 Jew. Not one of all those who talk this way has witnessed it, not one of them has been through it. Most of *you* know what it means when 100 corpses are lying side by side, or 500 or 1000. To have stuck it out and at the same time —apart from exceptions caused by human weakness— to have remained decent fellows, that is what has made us hard. This is a page of glory in our history which has never been written and is never to be written, for we know how difficult we should have made it for ourselves if —with the bombing raids, the burdens and the deprivations of war— we still had Jews today in every town as secret saboteurs, agitators and trouble-mongers. We would now probably have reached the 1916/17 stage when the Jews were still in the Ger man national body.

We have taken from them what wealth they had. I have issued a strict order, which SS-Obergruppenführer Pohl has carried out, that this wealth should, as a matter of course, be handed over to the Reich without reserve. We have taken none of it for ourselves. Individual men who have lapsed will be punished in accordance with an order I issued at the beginning, which gave this warning; Whoever takes so much as a mark of it, is a dead man. A number of SS men —there are not very many of them— have fallen short, and they will die, without mercy. We had the moral right, we had the duty to our people, to destroy this people which wanted to destroy us. But we have not the right to enrich [65] ourselves with so much as a fur, a watch, a mark, or a cigarette or anything else. Because we have exterminated a bacterium we do not want, in the end, to be infected by the bacterium and die of it. I will not see so much as a small area of the sepsis appear here or gain a hold. Wherever it may form, we will cauterize it. Altogether however, we can say that we have fulfilled this most difficult duty for the love of our people. And our spirit, our soul, our character has not suffered injury from it.[186]

All of this may come as a shock to the unbiased but uninitiated reader, who might get the impression that Himmler was actually talking about ideologically motivated, systematic murder of Jews. But those who are acquainted with the facts of this period in history will find it difficult to believe that Himmler made *all* these remarks, some of which are utterly nonsensical. A fair guess is that certain passages necessary to the continuity of the document are missing, for no logical connection really exists between the things Himmler purportedly discussed in this speech. He seems to be talking about several different matters, viz., the evacuation of the Jews, the efforts of the *Einsatzgruppen* to combat guerilla warfare, the suppression of Jewish mutinies

[186] We are talking here about barely two pages of a 62-page address: See IMT XXIX, 122ff.

in Sobibor, Treblinka (autumn 1943), and, most especially, the Warsaw Ghetto (April-May 1943). That Himmler is not referring to large-scale, systematic murder of the Jews —even when he is apparently discussing executions— is evident from the comparatively small number of "corpses" he mentions: 100, 500, or 1,000. Far greater numbers of people are usually said to have perished in the "gas chambers" at any one time.

Let us examine some details of Himmler's alleged statements which not only indicate that the passage quoted above is incomplete, but also add to the suspicion that it may be forged.

Above all, it is astonishing that Himmler should have had no qualms about defining "evacuation of the Jews" as "extermination of the Jewish people." Of course, one may claim that he was simply employing the "code-words" purportedly used by functionaries involved in the "extermination program" but, as we have noted, there is no proof that such a jargon existed. The audience for this speech was definitely not composed of those SS leaders who might have been involved in the "secret extermination of the Jews" — assuming for a moment there was such a plan. If they had been, Himmler surely would have commented in greater detail on this subject, instead of limiting himself to generalities. All things considered, it is quite improbable that he would have suddenly confronted an unprepared audience with the "real" meaning of the term "evacuation of the Jews." If the "extermination of the Jews" were, as is usually claimed, so highly secret that Hitler personally communicated to Himmler the order to carry it out, would Himmler have discussed this matter before a large assembly of men who had little or nothing to do with it? Here one recalls that it is frequently alleged, on the basis of statements made by Rudolf Höss, that Himmler personally transmitted [66] Hitler's "secret order" for the "extermination of the Jews" to Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz, instructing him to keep absolutely silent about it.[187] If this be so, Himmler would not have enlarged the circle of initiates to any great extent, even without going into details. Hence this portion of the speech cannot be authentic.

It seems strange, too, that Himmler should allude to the "elimination" ("Ausrottung") of the Jews as being contained in the party program of the NSDAP, since it is neither mentioned nor implied there.[188] Himmler's supposed

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[187] *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 107, 120, 152; see also Krausnick in *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 414f.

[188] The Jewish problem is expressly addressed only in point 4 of the party program of the NSDAP. There it is pointed out that a citizen of the State can only be one who is also a member of the Volk (*Volksgenosse*); a member of the Volk can only be one who is of German blood, without regard to religion. Therefore no Jew can be a member of the Volk. And further on, point 5 declares: A non-citizen should only be able to live in Germany as a guest, and must be subject to the laws for aliens.

Finally, the deportation or expulsion of non-citizens from the Reich was proclaimed in point 7 under certain conditions. In point 8, halting further immigration of non-Germans was demanded, as well as the immediate expulsion of non-Germans who had immigrated into Germany after August 2, 1914. The latter was directed against the Jews from the East (*Ostjuden*), who had immigrated to the Reich in great numbers after World War I, and who in many respects had made themselves odious to the German people.

In addition, it can be gathered from point 23 that the Jews were to be banned from the press, and point 24 states that the party was fighting against the materialist Jewish spirit. This was the whole Jewish program of the NSDAP, and considering that the party desired an ethnically

claim to the contrary, no level-headed Party Comrade would ever have seriously advocated such a thing. That Himmler uttered this nonsense in front of high-ranking SS leaders, who were perfectly familiar with the NSDAP program, is virtually impossible. Somebody who had not the faintest inkling of the actual contents of the NSDAP program must have slipped these remarks into the speech.

Just as incongruous is the statement in the second paragraph of the address: "We had the moral right, we had the duty to our people, to destroy this people which wanted to destroy us" ("Wir hatten das moralische Recht, wir hatten die Pflicht gegenüber unserem Volk, dieses Volk, das uns umbringen wollte, umzubringen"). Himmler allegedly said this when discussing the confiscation of the evacuated Jews' wealth. In that context, it stands out as a foreign body. Since the Jews still residing in Germany and German-occupied territory were —considering that a war was going on— undoubtedly a security risk, as Himmler pointed out, their evacuation and internment in camps or ghettos was perhaps necessary, but not their murder, which is what the word "umbringen" ("destroy" "kill") denotes.[189] It may be argued that the Jews were quarantined out of racial hatred, not for any logical reason. But that would not explain why Himmler had no reservations about discussing an "extermination plan" when the official line was that the Jews were simply being "evacuated" eastwards. To say that this was, after all, a "secret speech" is to beg the question.

Quite possibly, the words "Ausrottung" (which can mean either "extermination" or "uprooting") and "umbringen" (which can mean either "destroy" or "kill") were mistranslated —deliberately or accidentally —in the passage of the speech that appears in English under the heading "The Clearing out of the Jews" assuming that Himmler actually used these words. Deliberate mistranslations are nothing new. When President Roosevelt, who saw the mutual defence pact between Germany and Japan as the "back door" through which an unwilling American people could be herded into the European conflict, was zealously attempting to provoke a war with Japan, a U.S. government agency deliberately mistranslated a Japanese official document.[190] Thanks to Professor Rassinier, we know that distorted translations were employed in the Nuremberg IMT trial. For example, in a retroversion of the English translation of the "Wannsee Protocol" the phrase "Zurückdrängung der[[67] Juden" ("pushing back the Jews" *i.e.*, to the eastern countries whence they came to Germany) was rendered as "Vernichtung" ("extermination"). To give another instance, the American Chief Prosecutor cited a translation in which the expression "Ausrottung des Judentums" ("eradication of Jewry or Judaism") was made into "extermination of the Jews" —which, of course, is something altogether different. For as Rassinier has pointed out, Jewry is,

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homogeneous state, these demands were neither unreasonable or immoral. There was nowhere in the party program mention of "eliminating the Jews."

[189] That this was the official position of the German authorities follows from the documentation by the International Red Cross of its activity on behalf of civilians imprisoned in the German concentration camps (Red Cross Report, *op. cit.*, p. 15).

[190] The document was an instruction from the Japanese foreign minister, Togo, to Japan's ambassador to the United States, Nomura, which was intercepted by U.S. Intelägence and so distorted in translation that only threats and deceit could be read from it. See on this Damals: *Zeitschrift für geschichtliches Wissen*, Heft 1/1976, pp. 22ff.

among other things, an *idea*, or, to put it in other words, an expression of a common mentality, just as is Christianity (or Christendom). When one speaks of eradicating an idea, that does not necessarily mean physically exterminating the bearers of that idea, in this case, individual Jews. At least, one should not jump to that conclusion. Rassinier maintains that in this speech of Himmler's the term "Ausrottung" is used not in the sense of "extermination" but rather "exclusion" or "elimination of the influence" of the Jews.[191]

Be that as it may, Nuremberg Document 1919-PS must be considered highly suspect, especially the part of it quoted above. It contains so many muddled, incongruous, and utterly nonsensical remarks that even in the post-war "re-education" literature it is usually cited only by the sentence. In their collection of "secret speeches" Peterson and Smith make only a brief mention of this address. Instead of reproducing it, they give the full text of another of Himmler's speeches, delivered two days later, on October 6, 1943, before a meeting of Reichsleiter and Gauleiter in Posen. It also contains a discussion of the "Jewish Question" which Peterson and Smith describe as the "most open and characteristic passage on the extermination of the Jews."[192] In point of fact, the train of thought is much the same as in Nuremberg Document 1919-PS, though this speech is somewhat better organized than the earlier one and lacks its crass absurdities. According to this text, Himmler made the following remarks on the "Jewish Question":

> Ich darf hier in diesem Zusammenhang und in diesem allerengsten Kreise auf eine Frage hinweisen, die Sie, meine Parteigenossen, alle als selbstverständlch hingenommen haben, die aber für mich die schwerste Frage meines Lebens geworden ist, die Judenfrage. Sie alle nehmen es selbstverständlich und erfreulich hin, dass in Ihrem Gau keine Juden mehr sind. Alle deutschen Menschen – abgesehen von einzelnen Ausnahmen – sind sich darüber klar, dass wir den Bombenkrieg, die Belastungen des vierten und des vielleicht kommenden fünften und sechsten Kriegsjahres nicht aushalten hätten und nicht aushalten würden, wenn wir diese zersetzende Pest noch in unserem Volkskörper hätten. Der Satz "Die Juden müssen ausgerottet werden" mit seinen wenigen Worten, meine Herren, ist leicht ausgesprochen. Für den, der durchführen muss, was er fordert, ist es das Allerhärteste und Schwerste, was es gibt. Sehen Sie, natürlich sind es Juden, es ist ganz klar, es sind nur Juden, bedenken Sie aber selbst, wie viele – auch Parteigenossen – ihr berühmtes Gesuch an mich oder irgendeine Stelle gerichtet haben, in dem es hieß, dass alle Juden selbstverständlich Schweine seien, dass bloss der Soundso ein anständigen Jude sei, dem man nichts tun dürfe. Ich wage zu behaupten, dass es nach der Anzahl der Gesuche und der Anzahl der Meinungen in Deutschland mehr [68] anständige Juden gegeben hat, als überhaupt nominell vorhanden waren. In Deutschland haben wir nämlich so viele Millionen Menschen, die ihren einen berühmten anständigen Juden haben, dass diese Zahl bereits grösser ist als die Zahl der Juden. Ich will das bloss anführen, weil Sie aus dem Lebensbereich Ihres eigenen Gaues bei achtbaren und anständigen nationalsozialistischen Menschen feststellen können, dass auch von ihnen jeder einen anständigen Juden kennt.
>
> Ich bitte Sie, das, was ich Ihnen in diesem Kreise sage, wirklich nur zu hören und nie darüber zu sprechen. Es trat an uns die Frage heran: Wie ist es mit den Frauen und Kindern? – Ich habe mich entschlossen, auch hier eine ganz klare Lösung zu finden. Ich hielt mich nämlich nicht für berechtigt, die Männer auszurotten – sprich also, umzubringen oder umbringen zu lassen – und die Rächer in Gestalt der Kinder für unsere Söhne und Enkel groß werden zu lassen. Es musste der schwere Entschluss gefasst werden, dieses Volk von der Erde verschwinden zulassen. Für die Organisation, die den Auftrag durchführen musste, war es der schwerste, den wir bisher hatten. Er ist durchgeführt worden, ohne dass — wie ich glaube sagen zu können – unsere Männer und unsere Führer einen Schaden an Geist und Seele erlitten hätten. Diese Gefahr lag sehr nahe. Der Weg zwischen den beiden hier bestehenden Möglichkeiten, entweder roh zu werden und menschliches Leben nicht mehr zu

[191] *Was ist Wahrheit?*, p. 91, footnote 27.
[192] *Op. cit.*, p. 301, footnote 16.

achten oder weich zu werden und durchzudrehen bis zu Nervenzusammenbruch – der Weg zwischen Scylla und Charybdis ist entsetzlich schmal.

Wir haben das ganze Vermögen, das wir bei den Juden beschlagnahmten – es ging in unendliche Werte – bis zum letzten Pfennig an den Reichswirtschaftsminister abgeführt. Ich habe mich immer auf den Standpunkt gestellt: Wir haben die Verpflichtung unserem Volke, unserer Rasse gegenüber, wenn wir den Krieg gewinnen wollen – wir haben die Verpflichtung unserem Führer gegenüber, der nun in 2000 Jahren unserem Volk einmal geschenkt worden ist, hier nicht klein zu sein und hier konsequent zu sein. Wir haben aber nicht das Recht, auch nur einen Pfennig von dem beschlagnahmten Judenvermögen zu nehmen. Ich habe von vornherein festgesetzt, das SS-Männer, auch wenn sie nur eine Mark davon nehmen, des Todes sind. Ich habe in den letzten Tagen deswegen einige, ich kann es ruhig sagen, es sind etwa ein Dutzend – Todesurteile unterschrieben. Hier muss man hart sein, wenn nicht das Ganze darunter leiden soll. – Ich habe mich für verpflichtet gehalten zu Ihnen als den obersten Willensträgern, als den obersten Würdenträgern der Partei, dieses politischen Ordens, dieses politischen Instruments des Führers, auch über eine Frage einmal ganz offen zu sprechen und zu sagen, wie es gewesen ist. – Die Judenfrage in den von uns besetzten Ländern wird bis Ende dieses Jahres erledigt sein. Es werden nur Restbestände von einzelnen Juden übrig bleiben, die untergeschlüpft sind. Die Frage der mit nichtjüdischen Teilen verheirateten Juden und die Frage der Halbjuden werden sinngemäß und vernünftig untersucht, entschieden und dann gelöst.

Dass ich grosse Schwierigkeiten mit vielen wirtschaftlichen Einrichtungen hatte, werden Sie mir glauben. Ich habe in den Etappengebieten grosse Judenghettos ausgeräumt. In Warschau haben wir in einem Judenghetto vier Wochen Straßenkampf gehabt. Vier Wochen! Wir haben dort ungefähr 700 Bunker ausgehoben. Dieses ganze Ghetto machte also Peltzmäntel, Kleider und ähnliches. Wenn man früher dort hinlangen wollte, so hieß es: Halt! Sie stören die Kriegswirtschaft! Halt! Rüstungsbetrieb! – Natürlich hat das mit Parteigenosen Speer nichts zu tun, Sie können gar nichts dazu. Es ist der Teil von angeblichen Rüstungsbetrieben, die der Parteigenose Speer und ich in den nächsten Wochen und Monaten gemeinsam reinigen wollen. Das werden wir genau so unsentimental machen, wie im fünften Kriegsjahr alle Dinge unsentimental, aber mit großem Herzen für Deutschland gemacht werden müssen.

Damit möchte ich die Judenfrage abschließen. Sie wissen nun Bescheid, und Sie behalten es für sich. Man wird vielleicht in ganz später Zeit einmal überlegen kön[69]nen, ob man dem deutschen Volke etwas mehr darüber sagt. Ich glaube, es ist besser, wir – wir insgesamt – haben das für unser Volk getragen, haben die Verantwortung auf uns genommen (die Verantwortung für eine Tat, nicht nur für eine Idee) und nehmen dann das Geheimnis mit in unser Grab.

In this connection, I may comment before this very tightly knit group on a matter which you, my Party Comrades, all take for granted, and which is the most difficult task I have ever faced in my life, the Jewish problem. All of you gladly take it for granted that there are no longer any Jews in your administrative districts. All Germans —with a few individual exceptions— are aware that we could not have endured the bombings, the hardships of the fourth year of the war, and could not endure fifth and sixth years of war that are perhaps yet to come, if we still had this demoralizing pest in our national body. “The Jews must be eradicated.” This brief sentence is easily said. But for the man who must carry out what it calls for, it is the gravest and hardest thing in existence. Now, look, after all they're Jews, only Jews. That's plain enough. But just think about how many people — including Party comrades— have addressed to me and other officials those famous petitions of theirs in which they say: The Jews are all bastards, of course, but so-and-so is a good Jew and should be left alone. I daresay, judging by the number of such appeals and the number of people who express such opinions, the number of “good Jews” in Germany must have exceeded the total Jewish population! In Germany we have millions and millions of people who each have their “one good Jew.” I mention this only because you can see in the vital field of your own administrative districts how many respected and upright National Socialists have their “good Jew.”

I ask that you assembled here pay attention to what I have to say, but not repeat it. The question came up: Well, what about the women and children?— I came to a determinedly simple conclusion about that, too. I did not believe that I had the right to wipe out the men—rather I should say, kill them or have them killed— and let their children grow up to avenge themselves on our sons and grandsons. The hard decision to wipe this people off the face of the earth had to be made. For us, the organization that had to carry out this task, it was the most difficult one we ever had. But it was accomplished, and without— I

> believe I can say— our men and their leaders suffering any mental or spiritual damage. That was clearly a danger. To become too brutal, too heartless, and lose respect for human life, or to be too soft and bring oneself to the point of a nervous breakdown —the path between these two ever-present possibilities is incredibly narrow, the course between Scylla and Charybdis.
>
> We have turned over to the Reich Ministry of Economics all the wealth we confiscated from the Jews —the sums were staggering— right down to very last penny. I have always maintained: We have a duty to our people, to our race, we have a duty to a leader such as has been given to our people only once in 2,000 years, not to be petty here, but to go the limit, as we must do in all things if we are to win the war. Yet we do not have the right to take even one penny of the wealth confiscated from the Jews. At the outset, I laid down the line: Any SS men who take so much as a mark of it are as good as dead. In the past few days, I've had to sign a number of death sentences —I might as well say it, there were about a dozen. One has to be strict here, or everyone will suffer. I considered it my duty to speak very openly to you —the highest bearers of the will, the highest dignitaries, of the Party, of this political order, of this political instrument of the Führer— about this matter and to give the facts as they are. By the end of the year, the Jewish problem in the lands we have occupied will be solved. There will be left only remnants, individual Jews who are in hiding. The problem of Jews who are partners in mixed marriages and the problem of half-Jews will, in accordance with this policy, be rationally examined, decided upon, and resolved.

[70]

> Believe me, I've had lots of trouble with many units of the economic apparatus. I cleared out big Jewish ghettos in the area of the lines of communication. In Warsaw, we had four weeks of street-fighting in the ghetto. Four weeks! We had to clean out around 700 bunkers. This whole ghetto was making fur coats, dresses, and the like. Time was, if you tried to lay a hand on that place, you'd be told: Stop! You're interfering with the war effort. Stop! This is part of the armaments industry. – Of course, Party Comrade Speer had nothing to do with that. There is nothing you people can do about it. It is a part of the so-called armaments industry that Comrade Speer and I will be cleaning up in the forthcoming weeks and months. We will do this quite unsentimentally, as all things must be done in the fifth year of the war, without sentiment but with a stout heart for Germany.
>
> With this I'll wind up my discussion of the Jewish problem. You now have the necessary information, and you will keep it to yourselves. At some much later date, one may consider the possibility of telling the German people a little more. I believe that it is better that we all bear this together for our people, as we have done, and take the responsibility on ourselves (the responsibility for a deed, not just for an idea) and take this secret with us to our graves.[193]

The "re-education" scribblers are fond of quoting this speech. In contrast to them, I have reproduced this passage in its entirety, so that Himmler's remarks can be seen in context. Even if it seems more polished than the Posen address, and, above all, does not contain as many glaring absurdities, this speech cannot be judged in any different terms. It is quite improbable that Himmler would have used such remarks to inform the Reichsleiter and Gauleiter of the genocide supposedly carried out by the SS on his orders.

No doubt the first and third paragraphs of this excerpt concern the evacuation of the Jews from Germany and the occupied Western European countries. This is especially true of the last part of the third paragraph (after the dashes), which, incidentally, contains an echo of the "Wannsee Protocol" in its approach to the problem of mixed marriages and persons of mixed parentage. Since Himmler mentions "remnants" who are "in hiding" he can only be referring here to the evacuation of the Jews from Germany and the occupied European countries. He could not be referring to the subsequent fate of Jews evacuated to the eastern ghettos and concentration camps, for there they would find no place to "hide." The sentence "The Jews must be

[193] Cited after Smith and Peterson, pp. 169f.

eradicated" ("Die Juden müssen ausgerottet werden"), in the first paragraph, is an absurdity, and was probably forged into the text. Inasmuch as nobody in Germany had at that time heard anything about the "eradication of the Jews" Himmler would have had to provide these high-ranking national and regional administrators with some explanation of the term. Otherwise, these men, who were acknowledged leaders of the Party, would have been puzzled by it. In fact, if Himmler had discussed such a thing as killing off the Jews, he would most likely have chosen a word like "elimination" rather than "eradication."

When I asked two former Gauleiter, Karl Wahl and Rudolf Jordan, whether they had ever heard something from Himmler, directly or indirectly, about "this type of solution to the Jewish Question" (as I put it [71] to Wahl) or something about the "mass murder of the Jewish people" (as I put it to Jordan), neither of them could recall anything.[194] And neither of them could remember specific details of the meeting at Posen on October 6, 1943. Gauleiter Wahl believes it is possible that he missed the conference because of illness. He told me: "In 17 long years" —that is how long Wahl served as Gauleiter— "I never heard him say anything that was not humane or moral... I cannot conceive of Himmler's being so stupid as to make any such remarks, or, if he did, which I do not believe, to preserve them so that these literary shysters could publish them 30 years later." This last point is remarkably well taken. It casts doubt on the authenticity of Himmler's alleged discourse on the "Jewish Question" especially the final paragraph of it. For how can any rational person believe that Himmler would have had his remarks written down for posterity if he wanted to take the "secret" of the "Final Solution" with him to the grave, and advised his listeners to do the same? The real author of these lines must have believed —and it seems with good reason —that the human race is mighty gullible.

Gauleiter Jordan told me that during the war he heard "some executions took place in connection with tactical problems of combatting guerilla warfare" but these had nothing to do with the so-called Final Solution; they were "necessary wartime measures." I brought up this interpretation when discussing Himmler's address of October 4, 1943 to the SS-Gruppenführer (see p. 65 above), and I think the second paragraph of the excerpt from the speech of October 6, 1943 indisputably confirms it. As I have pointed out, the second paragraph of the excerpt has no discernable relation to the first paragraph. Some of Himmler's later speeches clarify and corroborate the fact that this reference must be to executions carried out against partisans (see p. 72 below).

Even if Wahl and Jordan did not attend the meeting at which Himmler delivered this talk, they no doubt would have heard, in some way or other, of his remarks on the "Jewish problem" had he actually made them. Their statements on this subject are therefore very pertinent. In my estimation, they are satisfactory proof that Himmler did not express the notions attributed to him in the present version of the speech of October 6, 1943. It would be a cheap shot to impugn the veracity of these two contemporary witnesses because of their former rank in the NSDAP —particularly since Himmler, as I already pointed out, would have had no reason to discuss the "Final Solution" with outsiders like Wahl and Jordan.

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[194] Letter exchange in possession of the author.

Incidentally, parts of this talk are cited in Professor Krausnick's Auschwitz Trial deposition, which purports to be a scholarly production. There it is quoted as follows:*

[72]

> I cleared out big Jewish ghettos in the area of the lines of communication... By the end of the year, the Jewish problem in the lands we have occupied will be solved. There will be left only remnants, individual Jews who are in hiding. The problem of Jews who are partners in mixed marriages and the problem of half-Jews will, in accordance with this policy, be rationally examined, decided upon, and resolved.[195]

In Peterson and Smith's collection, the first sentence of this excerpt appears as the second sentence of the fourth paragraph.[196] Also, in their version Himmler's remark about the "Jewish problem" being solved by the end of the year does not follow this sentence, as it does in Krausnick's version, but appears at the end of the third paragraph, hence in a different context. I leave it to the reader to consider the possible conclusions one may draw from the transpositions. When each of these two sentences is placed in a different section, Himmler's comments on the "Jewish problem" take on another meaning. At very least, the appearance of such variations in supposedly legitimate scholarly publications proves that some scholars do not hesitate to rearrange the contents of original sources —assuming that is what this document is— as the fancy strikes them. For the time being, we shall forgo discussion of how history-twisters untrained in the methods of scholarship — and they are in the majority— deal with these and similar historical sources.

Quite apart from all the misgivings one must have about these speeches because of the manner in which they were transcribed and transmitted, the manipulations disclosed above should make the unbiased observer think twice before regarding any "quotations" from them as absolutely reliable.

Proponents of the extermination thesis usually quote only the speeches mentioned above. Nevertheless, we shall discuss here a few other extracts in Peterson and Smith's collection, since they not only correspond to parts of the two Posen speeches, but also reveal even more clearly than those addresses that Himmler's remarks concerned the fight against guerillas and trouble in the ghettos.

In a speech he delivered before a group of naval commanders at Weimar on December 16, 1943, Himmler declared:

> Wenn ich irgendwo gezwungen war, in einem Dorfe gegen Partisanen und gegen jüdische Kommissare vorgehen zu lassen – ich spreche dies in diesem Kreise aus, als lediglich für diesen Kreis bestimmt – so habe ich grundsätzlich den Befehl gegeben, auch de Weiber und Kinder dieser Partisanen und Kommissare umbringen zu lassen. Ich wäre ein Schwächling und ein Verbrecher an unseren Nachkommen, wenn ich die hasserfüllten Söhne dieser von uns im Kampf von Mensch gegen Untermensch erledigten Untermenschen gross werden liesse. Glauben Sie mir: Dieser Befehl ist nicht so leicht gegeben und wird nicht so einfach durchgeführt, wie er konsequent richtig gedacht und in der Aula ausgesprochen ist. Aber wir müssen immer mehr erkennen, in welch ein primitiven, ursprünglichen, natürlichen Rassenkampf wir uns befinden.

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* This is my translation, not the version that appears in the English-language edition of Anatomie des SS-Staates, where, by the way, the phrase "die Frage der mit nicht jüdischen Teilen verheirateten Juden" is incorrectly translated as "the problem of the non-Jewish partners in mixed marriages." —T.F.

[195] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 446.

[196] Smith/Peterson, p. 170.

> Whenever I was forced to take steps against the partisans and Jewish commissars in some village —I'll say it for the information of this group only —I made it a point to give the order to kill the women and children of these partisans and commissars. I would be a weakling and I would be committing a crime against our descendents if I allowed the hate-filled sons of the sub-humans we have liquidated in this struggle of humanity against sub-humanity to grow up. Believe me, easy though it may be to talk in this lecture hall about carrying the idea behind this order to its proper, logical conclusion, it was not so easy to give the order and is not so easy to execute it. But we must come more and more to the realization that we are engaged in a primitive, elemental, organic racial struggle.[197]

Addressing a group of Army generals at Sonthofen on May 5, 1944, Himmler said, among other things:

> Wir sind alle Soldaten, ganz gleich, welchen Rock wir tragen. Sie mögen mir nachfühlen, wie schwer die Erfüllung dieses mir gegebenen soldatischen Befehls war, den ich befolgt und durchgeführt habe aus Gehorsam und aus voller Ueberzeugung. Wenn wir sagen: "Bei den Männern sehen wir das ein, nicht aber bei Kindern" dann darf ich an das erinnern, was ich in meinen ersten Ausführungen sagte. In dieser Auseinandersetzung mit Asien müssen wir uns daran gowöhnen, die Spielregeln und die uns lieb gewordenen und uns viel näher liegenden Sitten vergangener europäischen Kriege zur Vergessenheit zu verdammen. Wir sind m.E. auch als Deutsche bei allen tief aus unserer aller Herzen kommenden Gemütsregungen nicht berechtigt, die hasserfüllten Rächer gross werden zu lassen, damit dann unsere Kinder und unsere Enkel sich mit denen auseinandersetzen müssen, weil wir, die Väter oder Grossväter, zu schwach und zu feige waren und ihnen das überliessen.
>
> We are all soldiers, no matter what uniform we wear. You can sympathise with me about how difficult it was to carry out the military order I was given. I obeyed from a sense of duty and from total conviction. If you say "We can understand about the men, but not the children" then I must remind you of my previous remarks. In this conflict with Asia, we have to get used to the idea that the rules of the game traditional in European wars, likewise the moral usages, of which we are even fonder and to which we are even more attached, must be consigned to oblivion. In my opinion, we, as Germans, do not have a right —whatever tender sentiments well up from the depths of our hearts— to allow hate-filled avengers to reach adulthood. Our children and grandchildren would only have to contend with them, because we, the fathers and grandfathers, were too weak and too cowardly to do it ourselves.[198]

On May 24, 1944, in another speech to the generals at Sonthofen, Himmler declared:

> Ich glaube, meine Herren, dass Sie mich so weit kennen, dass ich kein blutrünstiger Mensch bin und kein Mann, der an irgend etwas Hartem, was er tun muss, Freude order Spaß hat. Ich habe aber andererseits so gute Nerven und ein so großes Pflichtbewusstsein – das darf ich für mich in Anspruch nehmen – dass ich dann, wenn ich eine Sache als notwendig erkenne, sie kompromisslos durchführe. Ich habe mich nicht für berechtigt gehalten – das betrifft nämlich die jüdischen Frauen und Kinder – in den Kindern die Rächer gross werden zu lassen, die dann unsere Väter [sic!] und unsere Enkel umbringen. Das hätte ich für feige gehalten. Folglich wurde die Frage kompromisslos gelöst. Zur Zeit allerdings – es ist eigenartig in diesem Krieg – führen wir zunächst 100 000, später noch einmal 100 000 männlicher Juden aus Ungarn in Konzentrationslager ein, mit denen wir unterirdische Fabriken [74] bauen. Von denen aber kommt nicht einer irgendwie in das Gesichtsfeld des deutschen Volkes. Eine Überzeugung aber habe ich, ich würde für die im Osten des Generalgouvernements aufgebaute Front schwarz sehen, wenn wir dort die Judenfrage nicht gelöst hätten, wenn also das Ghetto in Lublin noch bestünde und das Riesenghetto mit 500 000 Menschen in Warschau, dessen Bereinigung, meine Herren, uns im vorigen Jahr fünf Wochen Strassenkampt gekostet hat mit Panzerwagen und mit allen Waffen, wo wir inmitten dieses abgezäunten Ghettos rund 700 Häuserbunker gestürmt haben.
>
> I believe, gentlemen, that you know me well enough to realize that I am not a bloodthirsty man nor a man who takes pleasure or finds sport in the harsher things he must do. On the other hand, I have strong nerves and a great sense of duty —if I do say so myself— and when I recognize the necessity of something, I will do it unflinchingly. As to the Jewish women and children, I did not believe I had a right to let these children grow up to

[197] Smith/Peterson, p. 201.
[198] Smith/Peterson, p. 202.

become avengers who would kill our fathers [sic!] and grandchildren. That, I thought, would be cowardly. Thus the problem was solved without half-measures. At this time —it is one of those things peculiar to this war —we are taking 100,000 male Jews from Hungary to the concentration camps to build underground factories, and will later take another 100,000. Not one of them will ever come within the field of vision of the German people. I am convinced that things would look bleak for the front that has been built up to the east of the Government General if we had not resolved the Jewish problem there, if, for example, the ghetto in Lublin, or the massive ghetto in Warsaw, with its 500,000 inhabitants, were still in existence. It cost us five weeks of street fighting, using tanks and all sorts of weapons, to clean out the Warsaw ghetto last year. In that fenced off ghetto, we had to storm about 700 bunkers.[199]

Finally, on June 21, 1944, again before a gathering of generals at Sonthofen, he stated:

Es ist gut, dass wir die Härte hatten, die Juden in unserem Bereich auszurotten. Fragen Sie nicht, wie scher das war, sondern haben Sie als Soldaten – ich möchte fast sagen – Verständnis dafür, wie schwer ein solcher Befehl durchzuführen ist. Ziehen Sie aber auch bei kritischer Prüfung, nur als Soldaten für Deutschland denkend, den logischen Schluss, dass es notwendig war. Denn allein der Bombenkrieg wäre nicht durchzuhalten, wenn wir das jüdische Volk noch in unseren Städten gehabt hätten. Ich habe auch die Überzeugung, dass die Front bei Lemberg im Generalgouvernment nicht zu halten gewesen wäre, wenn wir die großen Ghettos in Lemberg, in Krakau, in Lublin und in Warschau noch gehabt hätten. Der Zeitpunkt, zu dem wir das letzte große Ghetto in Warschau – ich nenne Ihnen ruhig die Zahl – mit über 500 000 Juden in fünf Wochen Straßenkämpfen ausgeräumt haben im Sommer 1943, war gerade der letzte Zeitpunkt. Die Ghettos waren, so abgeschlossen sie auch gewesen sein mögen, die Zentralen jeder Partisanenund jeder Bandenbewegung. Sie waren außerdem Vergiftungsherde für die Moral der Etappe...

Ebenso will ich auch eine Frage, die sicherlich gedacht wird, gleich beantworten. Die Frage heisst: Ja, wissen Sie, dass Sie die erwachsenen Juden umbringen, das verstehe ich, aber die Frauen und Kinder...? – Da muss ich Ihnen etwas sagen: Die Kinder werden eines Tages groß werden. Wollen wir so unanständig sein, dass wir sagen: nein, nein, dazu sind wir zu schwach, aber unsere Kinder können sich mit ihnen mal abgeben. Die sollen das auch einmal auskämpfen. Dann würde dieser jüdische Hass heute kleiner und später groß gewordener Rächer sich an unseren Kindern und Enkeln vergreifen, so dass sie noch einmal das gleiche Problem zu lösen hätten...

Wie gesagt, in Warschau haben wir fünf Wochen Häuserkampf gehabt und 700 [75] Bunker ausgeräumt, Kellerbunker, manchmal zwei übereinander. Wenn ein Häuserblock erledigt war, dann kamen sie plötzlich hinten wieder hinaus. Der Jude hat immer Katakomben, Gänge, Kanäle. Das ist ein uraltes System. Er ist ein uralter Nomade. – Es war, wie gesagt, der letzte Zeitpunkt, denn ich glaube nicht, dass die Front im Generalgouvernement so leicht zu halten gewesen wäre.

It's a good thing we had the firmness to eradicate the Jews in our domain. Don't ask how difficult that was. As soldiers, you should appreciate —if I may put it that way— the difficulty of carrying out such an order. Also, as soldiers thinking only of what is best for Germany, you must, after critical examination, come to the logical conclusion that it was necessary. For the bombings alone would have been unbearable if we still had the Jews in our cities. I am likewise convinced that the front at Lemberg, in the Government General, could not have been held if we still had the large ghettos in Lemberg, Cracow, Lublin, and Warsaw. The summer of 1943 was the last possible time for clearing out the last big ghetto, the one in Warsaw, which had —I might as well give the figure— over 500,000 Jews, and that took five weeks of house-to-house combat. The ghettos, no matter how sealed off they may have been, were the centres of every kind of partisan and bandit activity. Likewise, they were breeding-grounds for the toxins of demoralization behind the lines...

I also want to answer a question which I am sure is on your minds. The question is: “Yes, of course, you're killing the adult Jews. I can understand that. But what about the women and children?” —Well, I have to tell you something. One day those children will have grown up. How could we be so contemptibly dishonorable as to say: No, no! We're too weak for this. Our children can take care of them. Let them fight it out, too! When the little Jews of

[199] Smith/Peterson, p. 203.

> today are all grown up, they'll vent their Jewish hatred on our children and grandchildren, who will have the same problem to solve as we did...
>
> As I said, we had five weeks of house to house fighting in Warsaw, and we cleaned out 700 bunkers —cellar fortifications— sometimes one on top of the other. When we got finished with one block, they suddenly came at us from behind. The Jew always has his catacombs, passages, tunnels. It is an ancient system. He's been a nomad from time immemorial. —As I said, this was the last possible time for this, and I don't believe that otherwise we could so easily have held the front in the Government General.[200]

Even these excerpts —Peterson and Smith do not give the whole texts of the speeches— must be regarded with skepticism, for they were taken from documents that are manifestly unreliable. In contrast to the Posen speeches, however, they show rather clearly that Himmler refers to the execution of Jews only in connection with the fight against partisans and other bandits operating behind the German lines on the eastern front. When some general comment on the "solution of the Jewish problem" or the "eradication of the Jews" appears, one may be sure that it is either the result of manipulation of the text or an outright forgery. It is simply inconceivable that Himmler would have given these high-ranking troop leaders a lecture on "genocide."

The indiscriminate actions against women and children during antipartisan operations were undeniably inhumane and virtually indefensible in terms of international law. Because those actions could hardly be concealed, Himmler had every reason to justify them to these leaders of the Army. As every veteran of the Eastern Front knows, women and even [76] children often took part in guerilla warfare. If the Germans sometimes made indiscriminate reprisals, they did so to assure the safety of their fighting men and to protect their lines of communication. But these reprisals were nothing in comparison with the carpet bombing of residential areas in German cities, which Churchill ordered for the purpose of indiscriminately killing German civilians —German women and children. For that slaughter there can be no justification whatever.[201]

But the essential point about these speeches of Himmler's so far as our inquiry is concerned, is that none of them contain any reference to "mass gassings" in "extermination camps." In none of his extant speeches does Himmler mention Auschwitz in this regard. Indeed, the second Sonthofen address suggests an alternative explanation of the fate of the Hungarian Jew who, in the spring and summer of 1944, were transported to Auschwitz and —so the story goes— "gassed": They were brought there as a labour force for the construction of underground factories.[202]

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[200] Smith/Peterson, p. 203ff.

[201] On the participation of women and children in partisan activity see also the documentation of Aschenauer, *NS-Prozesse im Lichte der Zeitgeschichte*, pp. 32 and 99. The number of victims of the air war from a single night of bombing might reach the tens or even the hundreds of thousands (Rumpf, *op. cit.*, pp. 107ff.). David Irving estimated the victims from the bombing of Dresden, which lasted 14 hours and 10 minutes, at 135,000. American estimates of those killed at Dresden range from 200,000 on up. See Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden*, p. 14.

[202] The American scholar Arthur Butz, employing key documents, overturned the Zionist lie that in the summer of 1944 approximately a half million Hungarian Jews were gassed to death in Auschwitz-Birkenau. This lie was accepted by the Frankfurt Assize Court in the so-called Auschwitz Trial without question. Since I have limited myself in this book to investigating the evidence offered in support of the extermination theory, I do not deal here with this important work. See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 133ff.

From Himmler's remarks one can deduce that the *Einsatzgruppen* did deal harshly with the Jews in guerilla-infested areas, proceeding merci lessly even against women and children. But it is also a fact that the Jewish population nearly always made common cause with the guerillas. the operations of the *Einsatzgruppen* were a reaction to the insidious and illegal methods of warfare employed by a dastardly and vicious foe, and they can hardly be classified as "genocide." One recalls that Himmler himself, in a memorandum he sent to Hitler early in the war, called the idea of physically exterminating a people "un-Germanic and impossible" (see p. 30 above).

Hans Frank

> We have fought against Jewry for years; and we have indulged in the most horrible utterances —my own diary bears witness against me... A thousand years will pass and still this guilt of Germany will not have been erased.

These words, which seem to confirm the allegations about the "extermination of the Jews" were spoken by one of the best known figures of the Third Reich, Hans Frank. Legal advisor to the NSDAP since the middle 1920's, Frank held several high offices after the Party assumed power in 1933, among them, the Presidency of the Academy of German Law. In October 1939, Hitler appointed him Governor General of Poland. He made the above statement under cross-examination at the Nuremberg IMT trial. Ever since then, his testimony, quoted verbatim or paraphrased, has been used to support the charge that genocide was committed against the Jews in the Third Reich.[203] At the Nuremberg IMT trial, the fact that the alleged extermination camps — including Auschwitz, of course— were located in Poland was used to saddle Frank with part of the responsibility for them. Actually, Frank had little oppor[77]tunity to exert influence on the camps, since they were under the direct control of the SS. Studiously ignoring this fact, the proponents of the extermination thesis set great store by Frank's histrionic "confession of guilt": After all, if anybody "knew what was going on" wouldn't it be the Governor General?

Nevertheless, as his interrogation before the Nuremberg Tribunal on April 18, 1946 shows, Frank knew nothing concrete about the "extermination of the Jews." Only once had he seen the inside of a concentration camp, Dachau, located in the German Reich proper. Of the "extermination camps" in the territory he administered he knew nothing beyond their names, if even that. In particular, he knew nothing about any "gassings."[204]

That alone detracts considerably from the significance usually attributed to this "confession." More important is the fact that this statement is almost always quoted only in part, and thus takes on a quite different meaning. Frank made this statement when Dr. Seidl, his defence counsel, asked him whether he had ever participated in the "annihilation of Jews." His full reply was:

> Ich sage ja; und zwar sage ich deshalb ja, weil ich unter dem Eindruck dieser fünf Monate der Verhandlung und vor allem unter dem Eindruck der Aussage des Zeugen Höss es

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[203] See for example G.M. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary*, p. 253.

[204] IMT XII, 7ff. See also Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 43. Not even the Polish historian, Stanislaw Piotrowski, who had at his disposal all 38 volumes of the so-called diary of Hans Frank, could bring forth any cogent evidence that Frank had either an extensive insight or any influence of importance on the concentration camps of the Government General. (See *Hans Franks Tagebuch*, published in German in Warsaw in 1963). Until 1944 Auschwitz was not even located in the area he had under his administration. Piotrowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 74f.

> mit meinem Gewissen nicht vereinbaren könnte, die Verantwortung dafür allein auf diese kleinen Menschen abzuwälzen. Ich habe niemals ein Judenvernichtungslager eingerichtet oder ihr Bestehen gefordert; aber wenn Adolf Hitler persönlich diese furchtbare Verantwortung auf sein Volk gewälzt hat, dann trifft sie auch mich; denn wir haben den Kampf gegen das Judentum jahrelang geführt, und wir haben uns in Äußerungen ergangen – und mein Tagebuch ist mir selbst als Zeuge gegenübergetreten – die furchtbar sind. Und ich habe daher die Pflicht, Ihre Frage in diesem Sinne und in diesem Zusammenhang mit Ja zu beantworten. Tausend Jahre werden vergehen und diese Schuld von Deutschland nicht wegnehmen.
>
> I say "yes"; and the reason why I say "yes" is because, having lived through the 5 months of this trial, and particularly after having heard the testimony of the witness Höss, my conscience does not allow me to throw the responsibility solely on the minor people. I myself have never installed an extermination camp for Jews, or prompted the existence of such camps; but if Adolf Hitler personally has laid that dreadful responsibility on his people, then it is mine too, for we have fought against Jewry for years; and we have indulged in the most horrible utterances —my own diary bears witness against me. Therefore, it is no more than my duty to answer your question in this connection with "yes." A thousand years will pass and still this guilt of Germany will not have been erased.[205]

At the root of Frank's "confession" is a single hypothesis: *If* Hitler's personal responsibility for a terrible crime somehow devolved on the German people, *then* Frank, too, would share the blame. Frank was, as he admitted, influenced by the five months of court sessions, above all, by the testimony of Rudolf Höss. That says it all. As numerous investigators have confirmed, psychological tricks, sham evidence, and perjured testimony were all used at Nuremberg to "demonstrate" the [78] "facts of the case" to the accused. By such means, most of the defendants probably were convinced that "mass gassings" did occur, though each of them emphatically and sincerely denied knowing anything about the matter.[206]

Thus Frank's "confession" proves nothing whatever. In fact, when he heard about the mass expulsion of Germans by the Russians, Poles, and Czechs, he revised his statement about a "thousand years of guilt."[207] It may be that he was only trying to curry favour with the judges by an ostentatious display of contrition, as the diary of the prison psychologist Gilbert suggests, and eventually saw the futility of that maneuver.

Not only Frank's bogus "confession" but also his diary —that "witness" against him— is frequently conjured up in the literature on our topic. As source material this "diary" is highly dubious, and it has no more to say about the "Auschwitz death factory" than do any of the other documents we have examined thus far.

If Frank's "diary" is treated here and not in the following section, it is because the thing is really not a diary in the usual sense —that is, a daily record of one's personal doings and observations. According to a statement his defence counsel made at the Nuremberg IMT trial, on July 11, 1946, which went uncontroverted, Frank did not write down a single line of it himself.[208] This thirty-eight volume document of more than 10,000 pages is simply a record Frank's secretaries and stenographers kept of his conferences,

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[205] IMT XII, 19. An abbreviated version was cited in the IMT Sentence; see IMT 1, 278.

[206] Heydecker/Leeb, *Der Nürnberger Prozeß*, pp. 489ff. Frank's plangent sighs in his last writings (*Im Angesicht des Galgens*, p. 304) -also mentioned in Piotrowski, p. 202 - "All the hopes that were destroyed by the crimes at Auschwitz! [What a] terrible fate, to think about this alone."— can only be explained by the psychological "deformation" of the accused by the methods used in the Nuremberg show-trials. His remarks have no relation to actual events.

[207] IMT XXII, 438.

[208] IMT XVIII, 156.

receptions, and other official functions. It is also a record —often merely in paraphrase— of his talks and speeches, and this, of course, is the part which the exterminationists are so fond of quoting. Whether Frank himself ever read this "diary" let alone checked the accuracy of the transcription, is doubtful. When he affirmed its "authenticity" at the Nuremberg trial, he was simply acknowledging that these thirty-eight volumes are a kind of official documentation of his years as Governor General. Only part of this material was presented in evidence at the Nuremberg trial (Nuremberg Document 2233-PS).[209] After the trial, all the volumes were handed over to the Polish authorities. Today they are reportedly in the files of the Ministry of Justice in Warsaw. They were "evaluated" in Poland, and in 1963 a detailed and lengthy study by Stanislaw Piotrowski appeared. That same year, Piotrowski also brought out an abridged German translation of his volume, under the title *Hans Franks Tagebuch*.

Let us dispense with such details and turn directly to those passages in this document which are usually adduced as "proof" of the "extermination of the Jews." Considering the size of this "diary" there are not many of them. For the most part, they are so vague and insubstantial that they carry little weight as evidence, particularly since —as I have noted— it is impossible to establish with any certainty the extent to which the "diary" is an accurate record of Frank's statements.

Contrary to what one might expect, the most copious selection of [79] Frank's alleged statements on the "murder of the Jews" is not to be found in Piotrowski's volume, but in Poliakov and Wulf's collection of "documents" *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden* ("The Third Reich and the Jews"). In many of the statements quoted there, Frank is merely advocating the relentless conscription of Jewish labour —a demand which, given the fact that the German people had been forced into a "Total War" can hardly be called unjust or even inhumane. We need not go into these statements, since they are not particularly relevant to our topic.

Frank's remarks at a governmental conference in Cracow on December 16, 1941 are customarily regarded as important and revealing. Hence they deserve to be quoted here at some length:

> Mit den Juden – das will ich Ihnen auch ganz offen sagen – muss so oder so Schluß gemacht werden... Ich weiss, es wird an vielen Maßnahmen, die jetzt im Reich gegenüber den Juden getroffen werden, Kritik geübt. Bewusst wird – das geht aus den Stimmungsberichten hervor – immer wieder versucht, von Grausamkeit, von Härte usw. zu sprechen. Ich möchte Sie bitten, einigen Sie sich mit mir zunächst, bevor ich weiterspreche, auf die Formel: Mitleid wollen wir grundsätzlich nur mit dem deutschen Volk haben, sonst mit niemandem auf der Welt. Ich muss auch als alter Nationalsozialist sagen: wenn die Judensippschaft in Europa den Krieg überleben würde, wir aber unser bestes Blut für die Erhaltung Europas geopfert hätten, dann würde dieser Krieg doch nur einen Teilerfolg darstellen. Ich werde daher den Juden gegenüber grundsätzlich nur von der Erwartung ausgehen, dass sie verschwinden. Sie müssen weg. Ich habe Verhandlungen zu dem Zweck angeknüpft, sie nach Osten abzuschieben. Im Januar findet über die Frage eine grosse Bespechung in Berlin statt, zu der ich Herrn Staatssekretär Dr. Bühler entsenden werde. Diese Bespechung soll im Reichsicherheitshauptamt bei SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich gehalten werden. Jedenfalls wird eine große jüdische Wanderung einsetzen.
>
> Aber was soll mit den Juden geschehen? Glauben Sie, man wird sie im Ostland in Siedlungsdörfern unterbringen? Man hat uns in Berlin gesagt: Weshalb macht man die Scherereien. Wir können im Ostland oder im Reichskommissariat auch nichts mit ihnen

[209] IMT XXIX, 356ff.

> anfangen, liquidiert sie selber! Meine Herren, ich muss Sie bitten, sich gegen alle Mitleidserwägungen zu wappnen. Wir müssen die Juden vernichten, wo immer wir sie treffen und wo es irgend möglich ist, um das Gesamtgefüge des Reiches hier aufrechtzuerhalten. Jedenfalls müssen wir aber einen Weg finden, der zum Ziel führt und ich mache mir darüber meine Gedanken. Die Juden sind auch für uns außergewöhnlich schädliche Fresser. Wir haben im Generalgouvernement schätzungsweise 2,5, vielleicht mit den jüdisch Versippten und dem, was alles daran hängt, jetzt 3,5 Millionen Juden. Diese 3,5 Millionen Juden können wir nicht erschießen, wir können sie nicht vergiften, werden aber doch Eingriffe vornehmen können, die irgendwie zum Vernichtungserfolg führen, und zwar in Zusammenhang mit den vom Reich her zu besprechenden großen Maßnahmen. Das Generalgouvernement muss genau so judenfrei werden, wie es das Reich ist.
>
> As far as the Jews are concerned, I want to tell you quite frankly, that they must be done away with in one way or another... I know, that many of the measures carried out against the Jews in the Reich, at present, are being criticized. It is be ing tried intentionally, as is obvious from the reports on the morale, to talk about cruelty, harshness, etc. Before I continue, I want to beg you to agree with me on the following formula: We will principally have pity on the German people only, and nobody else in the whole world... As an old National-Sociali st, I must say: This war would be only a partial success, if the whole lot of Jewry would survive it, while we would have shed our best blood in order to save Europe. My attitude [80] towards the Jews will, therefore, be based only on the expectation that they must disappear. They must be done away with. I have entered negotiations to have them deported to the East. A great discussion concerning that question will take place in Berlin in January, to which I am going to delegate the State-Secretary Dr. Buehler. That discussion is to take place in the Reich-Security Main-Office with SS-Lt. General Heydrich. A Jewish migration will begin, in any case.
>
> But what should be done with the Jews? Do you think they will be settled down in the "Ostland" in villages [Siedlungsdoefer]? This is what we were told in Berlin: We can do nothing with them either in the "Ostland" nor in the "Reichskommissariat." So, liquidate them yourself.
>
> Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourself of all feeling of pity. We must annihilate the Jews, wherever we find them and wherever it is possible, in order to maintain the structure of the Reich as a whole... We must find at any rate, a way which leads to the goal, and my thoughts are working in that direction.
>
> The Jews represent for us also extraordinarily malignant gluttons. We have now approximately 2,500,000 of them in the general government, perhaps with the Jewish mixtures and everything that goes with it, 3,500,000. We cannot shoot or poison those 3,500,000 Jews, but we shall nevertheless be able to take measures, which will lead somehow, to their annihilation, and this in connection with the gigantic measures to be determined in discussions from the Reich. The general government must become free of Jews, the same as the Reich.[210]

These remarks do not contain a shred of evidence as to *how* the alleged murder plan was carried out —least of all at Auschwitz— and make it clear that no steps had yet been taken to "exterminate the Jews." All that can really be concluded from them is that Frank *thought* such measures were a *possibility*, obviously approved of it, and, more importantly, had no idea how such a large number of Jews could be annihilated. He seems to have expected forthcoming discussions in Berlin to come up with a solution to the problem. Presumably, he is referring to the Wannsee Conference, but, as we have seen, its solution to the "Jewish Question" was limited to deporting the Jews from Europe to the eastern territories, and putting them to work there.

These are the facts of the matter. While Frank's speech does not place his character in a good light, neither does it tell us anything about the alleged murder of the Jews, unless one chooses to believe that this swaggering upstart had some homicidal plan of his own. But one must remember that Frank, though he may have imagined himself a king in occupied Poland, had no real decision-making powers, as Krausnick noted in his Auschwitz Trial

[210] IMT XXIX, 502.

deposition.[211] The level-headed observer will see Frank's harangue as dramatic bluster with which he hoped to give himself the air of a ballsy stalwart in the fight against world Jewry. He is the only "insider" who has indicated that a plan for the physical annihilation of the Jews existed at this time.

A detailed analysis Christoph Klessmann published in the *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* in 1971 confirms that Frank was a braggart who loved to pose as a big shot and tough guy. As Klessmann aptly remarks: "Often he was carried away by his own ecstatic verbiage, and the content of his speeches, already weak, was drowned in a stream of [81] pompous grandiloquence that even his contemporaries must have found ridiculous."

Klessmann describes the former Governor General —quite correctly— as lacking a sense of reality: "His words did not always match his deeds. This is true not only of his cynical and hybrid invective, but also of his definite promises and plans."

Taking this into account, one can hardly attribute great significance to the rhetoric of Frank's "diary." Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness, we shall quote a few of the more important passages in it. They are taken from Poliakov and Wulf's collection *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*.

On December 20, 1941, Frank, addressing a Security Police banquet, said, among other things:

> Kameraden der Polizei! Als ihr von der Heimat Abschied nahmt, da mag manche besorgte Mutter, manche besorgte Gattin zu euch gesagt haben: Was, zu den Polen gehst du, wo es lauter Läuse und so viele Juden gibt? Man kann natürlich in einem Jahr nicht sämtliche Läuse und Juden hinaustreiben, das wird im Laufe der Zeit geschehen müssen.
>
> Comrades of the Police! When you took leave of your homeland, many a worried mother, many a worried spouse must have told you: "What, you're going to Poland, where they have all those lice and all those Jews?" Of course, one cannot expel all the Jews and lice in one year. That will only happen in the course of time.(*Das Dritte Reich*, p. 180)

That same year, he made similar remarks at the Christmas party of the 1st Cracow Guard Battalion (645th Infantry Regiment).[212]

On January 25, 1943, at a police conference in Warsaw, Frank referred to himself as "War Criminal Number One":

> Wir wollen uns daran erinnern, dass wir alle miteinander, die hier versammelt sind, in der Kriegsverbrecherliste des Herrn Roosevelt figurieren. Ich habe die Ehre, Nummer 1 zu sein. Wir sind also sozusagen Komplizen im welthistorischen Sinne geworden.
>
> We must remember that we, who are gathered together here, figure on Mr. Roosevelt's list of war criminals. I have the honor of being Number One. We have, so to speak, become accomplices in the world historic sense. (*Das Dritte Reich*, p. 185)

Reading these lines today, one is inclined to suspect their authenticity, so strangely do they resemble the stuff dished out at the Nuremberg IMT trial. It is unlikely that any German leader of the time would have thought to describe himself so. At any rate, this statement is far too vague even to masquerade as evidence for the extermination thesis.

Frank's penchant for swaggering and boasting shows itself again in the following passage of an address he delivered to members of the NSDAP Speakers Bureau on August 2, 1943:

> Die NSDAP wird den Juden bestimmt überleben. Hier haben wir mit 3,5 Millionen Juden begonnen, von ihnen sind nur noch wenige Arbeitskompanien vorhanden, alles ist – sagen wir einmal – ausgewandert.

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[211] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 421.

[212] See Langbein, *Wir haben es getan*, p. 49.

[82]

> The NSDAP will definitely survive the Jews. We started here with 3,5 million Jews, and only a few labour battalions are left. All the rest have, let us say, emigrated. (*Das Dritte Reich*, p. 185)

The fact is that there were hardly 3,5 million Jews in all the territory controlled by the Third Reich, much less in the Government General. While Frank stated in 1943 that only a few "labour battalions" of Jews existed, at a press conference held on January 25, 1944 he said: "At this time, perhaps 100,000 Jews are left in the Government General."

Now, "100,000 Jews" are certainly more than a few "labour battalions." Nothing could show more clearly than this how seriously his remarks — assuming these *are* his remarks— deserve to be taken.

Finally, let us consider a statement that Frank, according to his "diary" made at an NSDAP Speakers Bureau workshop at Cracow on March 4, 1944, which is seldom omitted in any account of the persecution of the Jews in the Third Reich:

> Wenn heute da und dort ein Wehleidiger mit Tränen in den Augen den Juden nachtrauert und sagt: Ist das nicht grauenhaft, was mit den Juden gemacht worden ist, dann muss man den Betreffenden fragen, ob er heute noch derselben Meinung ist. Wenn wir heute diese 2 Millionen Juden in voller Aktivität, und auf der anderen Seite die wenigen deutschen Männer im Lande hätten, würden wir nicht mehr Herr der Lage sein. Die Juden sind eine Rasse, die ausgetilgt werden muss; wo immer wir nur einen erwischen, geht es mit ihm zu Ende.
>
> Whenever you hear somebody wimpering about the fate of the Jews today —"Isn't it terrible what was done to the Jews?"— you ought to ask that person how he can still hold this opinion. If we still had these two million Jews in full activity today, with just as few German men in the country, the situation would be out of control. The Jews are a race that must be wiped out. Whenever we catch one, he's finished. (*Das Dritte Reich*, p. 185)

All this statement really shows —besides the fact that he is always quoting different figures— is Frank's habitual boasting and posturing. The millions of Jews who survived the Third Reich are a living refutation of this claim of his.

In his book *Im Angesicht des Galgens* ("Facing the Gallows"), which he wrote in his Nuremberg prison cell, Frank lamented:

> Man hat auch nie... untersucht, ob ein wirklicher Kausalzusammenhang zwischen diesen gegen mich verwendeten Zitaten und dem wirklichen Geschehen bestand. Ich behaupte und erkläre, dass ich nie in meinem Leben einen Mord begangen habe, dass die Tötungen aller Art in unmittelbarer... Befehlsbezogenheit Hitlers und Himmlers zu ihren Krügers-Globocniks geschehen sind. Das ist einfach die Wahrheit.
>
> Nor did one ever... investigate whether a causal relation actually existed between the quotations used against me and the real events. I declare and maintain that never in my life have I committed a murder; all killings of any kind were the direct... result of Hitler's and Himmler's orders to their Krügers and Globocniks. That is the simple truth.[213]

When one is "facing the gallows" lying does not come so easily. No doubt this statement reflects Frank's mental depression, his despair [83] over the failure of his defence strategy, from which he expected so much in the beginning. At any rate, after his examination in the witness stand, he told the prison psychologist Gilbert:

> I kept my promise, didn't I? I said that, in contrast to the other people around the Führer who seemed to know nothing, I *did* know what was going on. I think the judges are really impressed when one of us speaks from his heart and doesn't try to dodge the

[213] See Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 404. See also *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1971, pp. 245, 260 (footnote 79).

> responsibility. Don't you think so? I was really gratified at the way they were impressed by my sincerity.[214]

Reading these lines, one would assume that Frank was thoroughly informed about the "extermination of the Jews" at Auschwitz, or some other place. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Frank was, in his own words, "influenced by these five months of proceedings and, above all... by the testimony of the witness Höss." Under examination he declared that he had read "a lot of things in the enemy and neutral press." One can only shake one's head woefully —as Göring did— at Frank's naïve credulity.

The only bit of truth in the last sentence of this quotation from *In Angesicht des Galgens*, which Frank wrote after the failure of his defence strategy of feigned "sincerity" is his affirmation of complete innocence. Though Frank seems to have believed that "all kinds of killings" took place, he still did not furnish any evidence that a "plan to exterminate the Jews" existed. It is quite obvious that his notions about this were formed by the nerve-racking Nuremberg show trial.

Alfred Rosenberg

This pretty much exhausts the stock of quotations from leaders of the Third Reich that are used to support the extermination thesis. Only the "Grand Inquisitor by the Grace of the Enemy" the Frankfurt attorney and erstwhile Prussian senior civil servant, Robert Max Wassili Kempner, attaches considerable importance to Alfred Rosenberg, the former Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, as a source of information on the "murder of the Jews." Kempner cites a "previously unpublished transcript, signed by Rosenberg" of a talk the Reich Minister gave members of the press, on November 18, 1941, which "nobody was allowed to write down." According to this document, Rosenberg said of the task awaiting him in the occupied territories:

> Im Osten leben etwa 6 Millionen Juden, und diese Frage kann nur gelöst werden in einer biologischen Ausmerzung des gesamten Judentums in Europa. Die Judenfrage ist für Deutschland erst gelöst, wenn kein Jude mehr bis zum Ural auf dem europäischen Kontinent steht... Wir haben deshalb vorzubeugen, dass nicht ein romantisches Geschlecht in Europa die Juden wieder aufnimmt. Und dazu ist es nötig, sie über den Ural zu drängen, oder sonst irgendwie zur Ausmerzung zu bringen.
>
> In the East there are about six million Jews, and this problem can be solved only [84] by the biological elimination of all Jewry in Europe. The Jewish problem will be solved for Germany only when the last Jew has left German territory, and for Europe when no Jew remains on the European continent, up to the Urals... We must, therefore make certain that never again will a generation of sentimental Europeans take in the Jews. And for this it is necessary to push them beyond the Urals, or otherwise eliminate them.[215]

It is astonishing how ingenious people like Kempner can be when it comes to producing "evidence" for the extermination thesis. But in their zeal they more often than not come up with things that lack even a semblance of plausibility. What is the point of holding a press conference at which reporters are not permitted to write down a word? Any unbiased reader with a grain of common sense must ask himself whether this "press conference" was actually held. It goes without saying that Kempner does not reveal where he "discovered" his "source document."

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[214] Gilbert, *op. cit.*, *Nuremberg Diary*, p. 254.

[215] Kempner, *op. cit.*, pp. 86f.

In all probability, it is just another forgery. For one thing, the "magic number" of 6,000,000 Jews makes an appearance in the very first line. That figure has been at the core of the extermination legend ever since the Nuremberg trials. According to the legend, 6,000,000 Jews were murdered in German-occupied territories; *ergo* 6,000,000 Jews must have lived there in the first place. However, at the time of Rosenberg's alleged statement that could hardly have been the case.[216] For another thing, the first sentence is so illogical that no one could reasonably attribute it to a man like Rosenberg. The matter of the Jews living in the East and the solution of the whole European "Jewish problem" are two separate things; they do not belong in the same sentence. This *non sequitur* is particularly evident in the next sentence, where Rosenberg abruptly launches into a discussion of the "Jewish problem" in Germany, for in Germany the "Jewish problem" had already been as good as solved through emigration.[217] In short, these statements are not only illogical, but also bespeak an ignorance of the whole subject.

Let us put aside for now these pertinent considerations and assume that this "document" really is genuine. It contains a reference to "biological elimination" ("biologische Ausmerzung"), which in ordinary usage has roughly the same import as "killing." From the last sentence, however, it is evident that Rosenberg is not suggesting the physical destruction of the Jews, but their expulsion to someplace beyond the Urals, well outside the European *Lebensraum*. To be sure, the use of "elimination" for "expulsion" is linguistically peculiar, but Rosenberg's alleged remark cannot be interpreted any other way. I suppose one might attribute this odd choice of words to the fact that Rosenberg was a Balt, and so may not always have been sure about proper German usage! But considering that the "document" was presented by Kempner —not exactly a trustworthy source of information— isn't it a bit more likely that we are dealing with deliberate manipulation of the text? (see p. 66 above) It may very well be that Rosenberg did not even use the [85] word "Ausmerzung" —assuming, of course, that he made any of these remarks to press people. Only an examination of the original could establish the truth. Yet, like those of nearly all the other important documents on the "extermination of the Jews" it is not available for inspection.

In this section it has been established that the public statements of Third Reich leaders do not give any indication that "gas chambers" existed at Auschwitz-Birkenau. They are not satisfactory evidence that there was a plan to exterminate all Jews in German-controlled territory, nor do any measures taken against the Jews point to the existence of such a plan. Only some of Himmler's utterances, in the form they have come down to us, indicate that numerous Jews —among them women and children— were liquidated in the occupied Eastern territories, without benefit of trial or the equivalent. Those executions occurred, however, during a guerilla war in which, as is well known, women and children took part, and in which several hundred thousand German soldiers were insidiously murdered.[218]

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[216] See Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 337ff.; Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, pp. 184ff.; Rassinier, *Das Drama der Juden Europas*, pp. 113ff.; Harwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 5ff.; Butz, *The Hoax...*, pp. 205ff.

[217] Kempner, *op. cit.*, pp. 86f.

[218] Härtle (*Freispruch für Deutschland*, p. 270) speaks of approximately 500,000 German soldiers who, according to the Russians, were murdered by Soviet partisans. This number was also

Finally, we must note the significant fact that none of the public utterances of Göring and Goebbels, who were perhaps the men closest to Hitler, could be used in this connection.[219]

Contemporaneous Manuscripts and Private Papers

Journals and Letters

Handwritten memoranda from contemporary witnesses to the war years that have any real bearing on the "slaughter of the Jews" are rarer than is commonly supposed. In the literature on our subject, journals and letters are quoted very sparingly. Their authenticity can seldom be verified. Usually, the originals are said to repose in some inaccessible archive, when their location is divulged at all. In 1964, that enterprising hack Hermann Langbein, a former Communist and Auschwitz internee, put together a collection of what he considered important passages from such contemporaneous documents. Entitled.... *wir haben es getan* ("... we did it") his little book is "dedicated to skeptics" (this is the heading of the first section) and designed to quell their persistent skepticism about the extermination thesis. The first 16 of a total of 136 pages are a verbose attempt to convince the reader that any suspicions he may have about these "self-incriminating documents" from "accomplices to the nazi murder actions" are completely mistaken. Since it is unlikely that Langbein left any stone unturned in his search for such material, his compilation is a good starting-point for our investigation. Let us inspect and evaluate the "evidence" he presents.

In the previous section, we dealt exhaustively with the various passages Langbein quotes from the "diary" of Hans Frank, so they re[86]quire no further comment here. Likewise, the passages he quotes from the diary of Otto Bräutigam, an expert in the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, are not especially relevant to our topic since —apart from a brief reference to pogroms the Lithuanian Auxillary Police allegedly conducted with the tacit approval of the German occupation authorities— all they really concern is the employment of Jewish conscript labour in the east for the German war effort. They do not offer the slightest indication that the Germans were systematically murdering Jews *en masse*, nor contain any mention whatever of Auschwitz or other "extermination camps."

Langbein devotes more space to the diary of SS-Hauptscharführer Felix Landau and to an exchange of correspondence between a police officer named Jacob and a Generalleutnant Querner. Having once been neighbors, Jacob and Querner were well-acquainted with each other, which circumstance may explain the unusual character of their correspondence. Both were stationed in guerilla-infested areas in the East, and that, too, is something one must bear in mind when reading their letters. Although they mention the liquidation of Jews, it presumably occured in the context of the anti-guerilla struggle, hence had nothing to do with systematic, racially-motivated "genocide." They never

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mentioned by Admiral Canaris, head of the Abwehr. Concerning the part which the Jews played in the partisan struggle, see Härtle, *op. cit.*, pp. 271ff., in which he relies on jewish sources. See also regarding this the documentation of Aschenauer, *NS-Prozesse im Lichte der Zeitgeschichte*.

[219] The speeches of Goebbels were published with a commentary by Helmut Heiber (see Bibliography). The speeches of Göring have until now, as far as I know, not been published.

talk about “extermination camps” least of all Auschwitz. In commenting on the excerpts from Landau's diary, Langbein tries to give the impression that Landau was involved in the outright murder of Jews. However, Landau's notes were written between July 3 and August 2, 1941 —that is to say, before the Wannsee Conference, which is usually considered the starting-point for the organized “extermination of the Jews.” From Jacob's letters it is obvious that the policeman was trying to impress his high-ranking acquaintance. Thus one cannot exclude the possibility that they are full of exaggerations. Neither the Jacob-Querner correspondence nor the Landau diary gives any indication that an officially sponsored campaign of genocide against the Jews was underway in German-occupied territories. (... *wir haben es gehan*, p. 54-73)

No more relevant to our inquiry are excerpts from letters a young physician named Fritz Mennecke wrote to his wife, Eva, between October 20, 1940 and April 7, 1943. With this correspondence, Langbein wishes to show the “genesis of the eradication of the Jews” according to his definition of the term. In his commentary, he hints that Dr. Mennecke's activities were connected with a euthanasia program, which supposedly was later extended to include Jews and other concentration camp inmates, as murder pure and simple. He even refers specifically to “selections” for death by gassing, though the letters in which Dr. Mennecke tells his wife about line-up examinations in hospital wards and concentration camps do not reveal their purpose. Likewise, the broadly worded “confession” Dr. Mennecke made while in detention pending trial contains nothing that is particularly relevant from the standpoint of [87] penal law. Like so many other “confessions” made back then, Dr. Mennecke's was an understandable manifestation of detention psychosis.[220] The excerpts from his letters also do not support anything Langbein would have us believe. “Skeptics” will remain unconvinced.

Langbein's collection is not the only book on the persecution of the Jews in which excerpts from the diary allegedly kept by Dr. Goebbels play an important role. What Langbein quotes from this “diary” is vague and contradictory. By dispersing these extracts throughout his little book, he can ignore the context in which they originally appeared. In one passage, he suggests that Dr. Goebbels was perfectly aware of the fate awaiting Jews deported to Auschwitz and other concentration camps. This is a good example of his habit of glossing over disputable points with his own commentary, a practice frequently encountered in the post-war “re-education” literature. Langbein's commentary differs from the usual “re-education” stuff in that he denies the alleged mass gassings at Auschwitz were so secret that no one but Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, Höss, and a little group of executioners knew about them. One wonders how Dr. Goebbels, who very seldom left Berlin during the war and who hardly knew the names of the concentration camps, could have obtained reliable information about occurances in those camps.

Langbein definitely knew what he was doing when he scattered fragments of the Goebbels diary *à propos* the treatment of the Jews all over his little book and regularly glossed over them with commentary. A coherent presentation would hardly have served his purpose of “convincing skeptics.” Therefore it may not be amiss to quote here a few of the diary passages in

[220] Dr. Mennecke “passed away” in prison shortly thereafter: Langbein, ...*wir haben es getan*, p. 39.

question from a relatively objective work, Heinrich Fraenkel and Roger Manvell's biography of Dr. Goebbels, which presents them in the sequence they were written.* Nothing could better show how little Dr. Goebbels knew about the treatment of the Jews. Whether Dr. Goebbels actually wrote these passages is, of course, debatable.

Fraenkel and Manvell introduce these quotations with the following statement:

> That Goebbels was not only informed about every detail of the murder of millions of Jews, but also welcomed the establishment of extermination camps and even directly called for it, is proved by his diary.

The reader must decide for himself whether that is true. Here are the quotations:

[88]

> 14 Februar 1942: Der Führer gibt nochmal seiner Meinung Ausdruck, dass er entschlossen ist, rücksichtlos mit den Juden in Europa aufzuräumen. Hier darf man keinerlei sentimentale Anwandlungen haben. Die Juden haben die Katastrophe, die sie heute erleben, verdient. Sie werden mit der Vernichtung unserer Feinde auch ihre eigene Vernichtung erleben... Diese klare judenfeindliche Haltung muss auch im eigenen Volke allen widerspenstigen Kreisen gegenüber durchgesetzt werden...
>
> February 14, 1942: The Führer once more expressed his determination to clean up the Jews in Europe pitilessly. There must be no squeamish sentimentalism about it. The Jews have deserved the catastrophe that has now overtaken them. Their destruction will go hand in hand with the destruction of our enemies... This uncompromising anti-Semitic attitude must prevail among our own people despite all objectors...

Obviously, here the expression "destruction" ("Vernichtung") does not mean the physical destruction of individuals. And the phrase "destruction of our enemies" refers, of course, only to the victorious outcome of the war, not to the killing of all the wartime opponents of Germany.

> 7 März 1942: Die Judenfrage muss jetzt im gesamteuropäischen Raum gelöst werden. Es gibt in Europa noch über 11 Millionen Juden. Sie müssen später einmal zuerst im Osten konzentriert werden. Eventuell kann man ihnen nach dem Kriege eine Insel, etwa Madagaskar, zuweisen. Jedenfalls wird es keine Ruhe in Europa geben, wenn nicht die Juden restlos im europäischen Gebiet ausgeschaltet werden...
>
> March 7, 1942: The Jewish question must be solved within a pan-European frame. There are 11,000,000 Jews still in Europe. To begin with, they will have to be concentrated in the East; possibly an island, such as Madagascar, can be assigned to them after the war. In any case there can be no peace in Europe until every Jew has been eliminated from the continent...

This entry sheds light on that of February 14. It shows that even after the Wannsee Conference the Madagascar Plan was still under discussion.

> 20 März 1942: ... Wir sprechen zum Schluss noch über die Judenfrage. Hier bleibt der Führer nach wie vor unerbitterlich. Die Juden müssen aus Europa heraus, wenn nötig, unter Anwendung der brutalsten Mittel.
>
> March 20, 1942: ... Finally we talked about the Jewish question. Here the Führer is an uncompromising as ever. The Jews must be got out of Europe, if necessary by applying most brutal methods.
>
> 27 März 1942: ... Aus dem Generalgouvernement werden jetzt, bei Lublin beginnend, die Juden nach dem Osten abgeschoben. Es wird hier ein ziemlich barbarisches und nicht näher zu beschreibendes Verfahren angewandt, und von den Juden selbst bleibt nicht mehr viel übrig. Im grossen und danzen kann man wohl feststellen, dass 60 Prozent

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* Dr. Staeglich cites the German edition of this work, which differs in a number of respects from the English-language original. For one thing, not all of the quotations cited there appear in the English version (I have taken the English text of these quotations from Louis P. Lochner's edition of the Goebbels diaries). For another thing, the account of the discovery of the Goebbels diaries is augmented in the German version of Fraenkel and Manvell's book. I thought it better to translate that longer and more specific account than simply to quote the corresponding passage in the English text. —T.F.

> davon liquidiert werden müssen, während nur 40 Prozent in die Arbeit eingesetzt werden können. Der ehemalige Gauleiter von Wien, der diese Aktion durchführt, tut das mit ziemlicher Umsicht und auch mit einem Verfahren, das nicht allzu auffällig wirkt. An den Juden wird ein Strafgericht vollzogen, das zwar barbarisch ist, das sie aber vollauf verdient haben. Die Prophezeiung, die der Führer ihnen für die Herbeiführung eines neuen Weltkrieges mit auf den Weg gegeben hat, beginnt sich in furchbarster Weise zu verwirklichen. Man darf in diesen Dingen keine Sentimentalität obwalten lassen. Die Juden würden, wenn wir uns [89] ihrer nicht erwehren würden, uns vernichten. Es ist ein Kampf auf Leben und Tod zwischen der arischen Rasse und dem jüdischen Bazillus... Gott sei Dank haben wir jetzt während des Krieges eine ganze Reihe Möglichkeiten, die uns im Frieden verwehrt wären. Die müssen wir ausnützen...
>
> March 27, 1942: ... Beginning with Lublin, the Jews in the General Government are now being evacuated eastward. The procedure is a pretty barbaric one and not to be described here more definitely. Not much will remain of the Jews. On the whole it can be said that about 60 per cent of them will have to be liquidated whereas only about 40 per cent can be used for forced labour. The former Gauleiter of Vienna, who is to carry this measure through, is doing it with considerable circumspection and according to a method that does not attract too much attention. A judgement is being visited upon the Jews that, while barbaric, is fully deserved by them. The prophesy which the Führer made about them for having brought on a new world war is beginning to come true in a most terrible manner. One must not be sentimental in these matters. If we did not fight the Jews, they would destroy us. It's a life-and-death struggle between the Aryan race and the Jewish bacillus... Fortunately a whole series of possibilities presents itself for us in wartime that would be denied us in peacetime. We shall have to profit by this...

The entry of March 27 is in such glaring contrast to the others that some doubt arises as to its authenticity. Even so, it also does not indicate that Dr. Goebbels was aware of any details of the alleged liquidation of 60% of the Jews in the General Government. Perhaps this figure is derived from some rumour that rigors of evacuation and the epidemics that often raged in the transit camps and the ghettos took a high toll of lives among Jews deported to the East. That would not, however, have anything to do with “genocide.”

> 29 April 1942: ... Mit den Juden macht man in allen besetzten Ostgebieten kurzen Prozess. Zehntausende müssen daran glauben...
>
> April 29, 1942: ... Short shrift is made of the Jews in all eastern occupied areas. Tens of thousands of them are liquidated...

What this means is uncertain. So far as the above considerations do not apply here, this entry could have reference to the efforts to combat guerilla warfare, since, as is well known, most of the “partisan” gangs operating on the fringes of the Eastern Front were riddled with Jews and some even consisted entirely of Jews.

> 2 März 1943: ... Wir schaffen nun die Juden endgültig aus Berlin hinaus. Sie sind am vergangen Samstag schlagartig zusammengeschafft worden und werden nun in kürzester Frist nach dem Osten abgeschoben. Leider hat sich auch hier wieder herausgestellt, dass die besseren Kreise, insbesondere die Intellektuellen, unsere Judenpolitik nicht verstehen...
>
> March 2, 1943: ... We are now definitely pushing the Jews out of Berlin. They were suddenly rounded up last Saturday, and are to be carted off to the East as quickly as possible. Unfortunately our better circles, especially the intellectuals once again have failed to understand our policy about the Jews...

This is the last of the Goebbels quotations. Fraenkel and Manvell conclude that “these and other such statements would have been sufficient [90] to convict Goebbels in any court.” They should have printed those “other” remarks, then, for the ones they quote do not justify this conclusion.

As we have pointed out, it is debatable that the pages from which these quotations were taken (dated January 21, 1942 to December 9, 1943) are authentic. On this matter, Langbein simply remarks that they were discovered in the ruins of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. He does not specify just where

and by whom the diary was found. However, Fraenkel and Manvell relate the following story:

> That these pages were rescued from the chaos of the fall of the Reich is due to chance. For his notes Goebbels used an unusually handsome and sturdy laid paper, such as the "average consumer" hardly ever got to see in those war years. After the capture of Berlin in 1945, some seven thousand sheets of this paper were lying around the courtyard of the Propaganda Ministry. Russian soldiers were about to bum these heaps of paper when a junk dealer, impressed by the quality of the hand-made paper, took the valuable and scarce commodity for himself, and thus saved the wartime memoirs of the Minister from the flames. Later, a great deal of effort was devoted to sorting and collating the scorched pages. In 1947-1948, Louis P. Lochner edited this material and published those portions of it that are of interest to the historian. The original manuscript reposes in the Stanford University Library in California, along with a copy of the Elberfeld Diary; a photocopy of the entire manuscript is to be found at the Institut ffir Zeitgeschichte in Munich. In those years, Goebbels no longer made his own entries in the diary, but dictated them to a co-worker, master stenographer Otte...
>
> Goebbels, by the way, never took the time to revise and polish his lengthy dictation once it appeared in Otte's neat typescript. That explains why the text is repetitious and stylistically uneven...

In many respects, this is a strange tale indeed. How are we to believe that Russian soldiers were about to bum unexamined documents from a Reich Ministry, but then decided-purely out of the goodness of their hearts, perhaps - to make a gift of them to a poor rag and bone man? It is strange, too, that a journalist "edited this material and published those portions of it that are of interest to the historian." Fraenkel and Manvell do not reveal how Lochner gained access to these papers. No doubt he had some story prepared to explain that, but refrained from telling it, lest the whole business appear even more improbable. Naturally, the 9doriginal manuscript"- like so many other fragments of the German official files of that era-is in the United States, where the possibilities for manipulation were unlimited, not in an archive in Germany, where it belongs.

In an evaluation he supplied the weekly news magazine Der Spiegel, Wilfred von Oven, the former adjutant of Dr. Goebbels, designated these scraps of the Reich Minister's diary as genuine. He based his opinion on the fact that they were written with a typewriter that had unusually large characters (nearly 1 cm high). Both Goebbels and Hitler used such a machine. Von Oven thought the content, style, and diction of the [91] pages of which he received photocopies (the entries of June 1943) fully corresponded to that in Dr. Goebbels'other writings."[221] He was not provided with copies of the entries under consideration here, the most crucial of which may be the one dated March 27, 1943. In a personal letter to me, dated December 27, 1977, von Oven wrote that he would "most likely not have given such an endorsement" had he "known of these questionable passages," and pointed out that it is possible to forge individual phrases and passages in typewritten documents.[222]

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[221] 1 See also *Nation Europa*, Nr. 4/1975, pp. 53ff. Langbein points out in the appendix to the aforementioned booklet that the Goebbels quotations used there are derived from the "diary," of which "excerpts were published by Louis P. Lochner" (*op. cit.*, p. 133).

[222] Interestingly, the Institut für Zeitgeschichte has admitted that passages could have been falsified. Before me is a communication on this which arose from an exchange of letters regarding the Goebbels diary. In the meantime, a Hamburg publishing house has published the first volume of a series of four of the so-called complete Goebbels diaries. I was not able to evaluate it for this particular study. Wilfred von Oven has identified them as falsifications. According to Oven, the authenticity of the citation from the Lochner edition, which also appears in this diary, can only be clarified by one of the three microfilms which Goebbels had made and had hidden in a secret place

In any case, the Goebbels quotations cited by Fraenkel and Manvell and by Langbein obviously do not help answer the basic question of our inquiry. If these authors seek to give the opposite impression, they are simply misleading us. Neither Auschwitz nor any other "extermination camp" is mentioned in these diaries.

Only one chapter in Langbein's compendium of "evidence" from diaries and letters has any direct bearing on the subject of our investigation. Entitled "Der Herr Professor in Auschwitz," it deals with the diary of Dr. Johann Paul Kremer of Milnster, an SS physician who was temporarily assigned to the parent camp at Auschwitz. In this chapter, Langbein adroitly uses the method of glossing over vague and insignificant diary entries with tendentious commentary to create a picture of horrors for the uncritical reader. Dr. Kremer is made to appear an unscrupulous type who followed orders automatically.

Despite his best efforts, Langbein does not manage to "convince the skeptic." Most of these diary entries are merely personal or professional memoranda, and contain nothing whatsoever to support Langbein's allegations about "extermination camps." Indeed, the real purpose of the Kremer quotations is apparently to flesh out an otherwise lean volume.

Only pages 81-93 concern Kremer's service as an SS physician at Auschwitz, which lasted from August 30 to the middle of November 1942, that is to say, somewhat less than a quarter of a year.

According to his notes, Kremer not only made medical examinations, but also participated in sundry executions (e.g., on November 10, 13, and 15, 1942) and in "special actions," some fourteen all told, which at one point he calls the "horror of horrors" (entry of September 5, 1942).

In his commentary, Langbein asserts that Kremer meant "selections" when he used the term "special actions." Whether or not this is true, it cannot be directly inferred from Kremer's notes. Nothing in this diary supports Langbein's claim that these "special actions" were "selections" of victims for the "gas chamber." Rassinier has written that inmates lived in constant fear of being selected for "gassing." It seems this apprehension can be traced to "latrine gossip" circulating in the camps. At any rate, Rassinier attests that the selections at Buchenwald and Dora, the two camps where he was interned, had nothing to do with the "gassing" of those unfit for work."[223] Since it cannot be inferred from Kremer's nnt.pq that the selections at Auschwitz were connected with "gassings." [92] Langbein tries to fit the "special actions" Kremer mentions into the extermination legend by reproducing parts of the memoir Commandant Höss allegedly wrote in a Cracow prison, shortly before his death. Langbein would have done better to inform his readers of what Kremer testified about these special actions when he was on trial before a German Court in Münster, after his release from ten years of imprisonment in Poland. Perhaps Kremer's testimony in this trial, which Langbein no doubt attended, clashed with the picture Langbein had drawn for himself. It was not possible for me to examine the records of the trial.[224]

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before he ordered his original diaries destroyed. None has yet been found. See von Oven, *Finale Furioso*, p. 647.

[223] *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, pp. 190f.; *Was nun, Odysseus?,* p. 75.

[224] See Appendix IV. Rawicz quotes, in the footnotes to his book *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS* (see pp. 215ff.), from the alleged statements of Kremer, who was a defendant at the People's Court in Cracow. Kremer is supposed to have confirmed that he was talking about "gassing" of Jews

The only time Kremer uses the word "gassing" is in an entry dated September 1, 1942: "This afternoon at gassing [i.e., fumigation] of barracks block with Zyklon B for lice" ("Nachmittags bei der Vergasung eines Docks mit Zyklon B gegen die Läuse").

Once again, we have it confirmed that Zyklon B was actually an insecticide used against the lice that plagued the camp. According to Kremer's notes, typhus epidemics raged almost constantly at Auschwitz, and even SS men took sick.

At the conclusion of the Kremer quotations, which are totally inadequate as proof of the extermination thesis, Langbein remarks with an undertone of indignation:

> None of the notes this university professor wrote in the long period after his return from Auschwitz would indicate that his experiences there affected him in the least. The few entries that are remotely connected with this subject are reproduced here (p. 104).

Considering that the "few entries" about Auschwitz have nothing tangible to say about "mass gassings" or any other crimes committed against inmates, it may be that he was both ignorant and innocent of such things. If this is so, it is pointless to complain, as Langbein frequently does, that Kremer's stay at Auschwitz made no impression on him in this regard. Langbein's indignation is quite incomprehensible, especially when one reads his statement that "Kremer was even glad that the prosecution had obtained his diary; he hoped that these notes would remove any suspicions against him (p. 127).

What else could better testify to his innocence than that belief? Nevertheless, in one of his later books, Langbein tries to rationalize Kremer's attitude with some twaddle about "even intellectuals" being able to "suppress the consciousness of guilt."[225] Given the situation in which Kremer found himself, we can virtually rule out this possibility. If the diary contained incriminating evidence —as Langbein claims— Kremer certainly would not have welcomed its discovery. Suppressed feelings of guilt, memories of unpleasant experiences, have a way of surfacing when some tangible reminder appears. That Kremer was so glad the diary had been found only shows that he was sure it contained nothing incriminating.

[93]

In conclusion, we may state confidently that the quotations collected in... *wir haben es getan* cannot in themselves convince genuine skeptics. As for Langbein's commentary, it is so full of contradictions and tricky, shoddy argumentation that it can only increase skepticism about the extermination thesis, which even this pioneer exterminationist admits is widespread. Langbein would have done well, for example, not to quote Himmler's letter to Felix Kersten of March 21, 1945. For this letter, in which the Reichsführer-SS mentions the evacuation of 2,700 Jews to Switzerland, pointing out that this meant the resumption of the course of action he and his co-workers had pursued until 1940, when the "war with its worldwide irrationality made its continuation impossible," can only be taken as additional proof that the Reich

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when he used the term "*Sonderaktion*" in his diary. Sehn reports the same thing in the Polish Anthology (vol. 1, part 2, pp. 22ff.). This Polish source cannot, however, be accepted as dependable. According to Sehn's account of Kremer's trial in Münster, Kremer retracted the statements he made in Poland. He was, however, found "guilty" as a result of testimony by witnesses.

[225] *Menschen in Auschwitz*, p. 392.

leadership had no plan to annihilate the Jews, but merely intended to expel them from Germany and Europe. All Langbein can say in response to this significant datum is that Himmler was, after all, the "creator of the Auschwitz death factory." With this supposedly ironic remark, Langbein is, of course, simply repeating the Q. E. D. of his little book. Couldn't he come up with any more convincing "evidence" for the extermination thesis than he presents in... *wir haben es getan*?

The War Refugee Board Report

In November 1944, the United States War Refugee Board (WRB) issued a booklet containing several "eyewitness" accounts of the "extermination camps Auschwitz and Birkenau."[226] Although this publication received worldwide attention, it also met with a certain amount of skepticism.

The first part of the WRB Report bears the title "The Extermination Camps of Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and Birkenau in Upper Silesia." It begins with the "firsthand accounts" of a pair of young Slovakian Jews who claimed to have spent two years in these camps before they managed to escape from Birkenau in April 1944. In Section 1 of their report "Auschwitz and Birkenau"), one of these Jews recounts how he was deported from the camp at Sered to Auschwitz, whence he was transferred directly to Birkenau. This section, the most extensive in a document of some 26 pages, is particularly important because it contains a detailed "report" on "gassing installations" and crematoria at the Birkenau "death factory," based on the claims of both Jews. According to the foreword of the WRB Report, the second Jew was deported on June 14, 1942 from someplace in Slovakia called Novaky, and reached Auschwitz, by way of the Lublin and Maidanek camps, on June 27, 1942, as related in Section II of the WRB Report. He was assigned to various jobs in both these camps. At an unspecified time, he was sent - for disciplinary reasons, he says - to Birkenau, where he is supposed to have staved for more than 18 months until his escape in April 1944. This [94] is all he has to say about his term in Birkenau. Section III of Part 1 (which is otherwise untitled) contains what is said to be the report of two more young Jews who allegedly fled Birkenau, on May 27, 1944. Their account, which according to the foreword of the WRB Report reached Switzerland on August 3, 1944, mainly describes events in Birkenau between April 7 and May 27, 1944, though it contains a few rumours about what happened earlier at the camp. Oddly enough, the two "reports" join together without a stitch; the first account leaves off at the very point in time where the second one begins.

According to the foreword of the WRB Report, the first two accounts contain only what the authors "underwent, heard, or experienced at first and," but "no individual impressions..." and "nothing passed on from hearsay."[227] The astute reader will note that this statement, which is intended to underscore the credibility of these "reports," is astonishingly self-contradictory.

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[226] U. S. War Refuge Board, *German Extermination Camps - Auschwitz and Birkenau*.

[227] The English text reads: "The following report does not contain everything these two men experienced during their captivity, but only what one or both together underwent, heard or experienced at first hand. No individual impressions or judgements are recorded and nothing passed on from hearsay."

Part 2 of the WRB Report bears the title "Transport," and is 19 pages long. According to the foreword, it was written not by a Jew, but by a "Polish Major," who was the only survivor of a group of 60 prisoners sent to Auschwitz from Cracow in March 1942. Obviously, this "report" based mostly on hearsay. For example, it contains a detailed account Birkenau (entitled "The Jews"), but the Major says that he himself lived and worked at the Auschwitz camp. He claims to have known at the time of his arrival, in March 1942, that inability to work meant automatic "liquidation by gas." Even if this report, many parts of which are written in the style of a cheap novel, is not a fabrication, this claim shows that it is based not on the author's own experiences, but on hearsay. One recalls that even then interested parties were spreading rumours about "gas chambers" and the like in and around Auschwitz.[228]

All the accounts in the WRB Report were published anonymously.[229] We are told that this was done to ensure the personal safety of their authors. Strangely, the fall of the Third Reich changed nothing in this regard. Neither of the purported authors testified at the Nuremberg trials. Not until the 1960's did an analytical chemist living in Britain, Dr. Rudolf Vrba, and a Czechoslovakian Government employee, Alfred Wetzler, step forward as the authors of the first two sections of the WRB Report. Later on, both appeared as witnesses in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. To this day, the identity of the two other Jews and the Polish Major has not been revealed.[230]

It is worth noting that after the war the WRB Report was consigned to oblivion. This document was not presented in evidence at the Nuremberg IMT trials, or at any of the post-war trials conducted by the Allied victors. Likewise, it was retired from public circulation, and today few people have even heard of it.[231]

This is all the more astonishing since the authors of the WRB Report [95] supposedly recorded those events while they were still fresh in their minds. What a neglect of valuable witnesses, especially for the Nuremberg trials! All the other accounts of this sort were made public years later, and the alleged authors are no longer among the living —if they ever were.

Today the Vrba-Wetzler report is cited very infrequently, and then only in the form of excerpts, while the other three reports have been totally forgotten.[232] Those who quote parts of this report evidently overlook the fact that it is not always in accord with the current "official" version of the

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[228]Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 110f.

[229] The most essential details of the report have been dealt with exhaustively by Butz.

[230] On this see in detail Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 94ff. The document, which Butz mentions, 022-L of the Nuremberg IMT trial, consists, however, of only a single page of the WRB-Report; namely a fist of Jews supposedly gassed in Birkenau (see also Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 207, p. 279). The actual accounts whichform the substance of this report are missing in the IMT volumes. They also remained unmentioned in the expert testimony presented by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in the Auschwitz trial (1963-1965). The "witnesses" Vrba and Wetzler were rather reluctant in regard to details about Birkenau as far as one can judge from trial records. Wetzler was supposed to have turned over to the court the English translation of a "sixty-page protocol" written by him and Vrba (Naumann, *Auschwitz*, p. 193). Unfortunately, I was not able to determine whether this "protocol" agrees with Vrba and Wetzler's 33-page account in the WRB-Report. My request to have a personal look at these documents was denied.

[231] Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 73f. Not even Rassinier seems to have known of the report; he does not mention it in any part of his works. Reitlinger makes only three short and very vague references in his book (*op. cit.*, pp. 121, 190, and 622).

[232] For example, in Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 243ff.

Auschwitz legend. In the book Dr. Vrba wrote about his "experiences," *I Cannot Forgive*, published in 1964, he himself contradicts many statements in the report he wrote with Wetzler, and, indeed, the most important ones. Even Vrba admits, by the way, that the WRB Report met with disbelief at first.[233]

Anyone familiar with the subject matter can readily see why this report on Auschwitz-Birkenau was assigned little importance after the war. Though it does contain some pertinent information- mostly wellknown facts-the Vrba-Wetzler report, in particular, is so full of inaccuracies that one may rightly doubt whether the authors ever were in Auschwitz or Birkenau. This suspicion is hardly diminished by the fact that Vrba and Wetzler purport to give precise figures on the deportation of specific groups to Auschwitz and detailed information about the subsequent treatment of these people. Supposedly, they were able to obtain this information because they occupied key positions in the camp hierarchy. Of course, there is no way of checking the figures they give, but their insistence on the accuracy of these statistics must itself arouse suspicion. It is difficult to imagine how even a prisoner belonging to the camp hierarchy could have conducted such an investigation. To record all those details -especially the figures-one would have required an almost phenomenal memory. No matter what the forword to the WRB Report says, much of Vrba and Wetzler's account is obviously based on hearsay. The critical reader will note that the authors contradict themselves on a number of important points.

All this simply leads one to the conclusion that the War Refugee Board- an agency directly responsible to the Chief Executive of the United States- issued this "Report" without bothering to ascertain its veracity, despite its assurances to the contrary. No doubt the officials of the War Refugee Board were delighted at finally having something concrete to present- including a few statistical "facts"- instead of the usual transparent atrocity tales. Their enthusiasm for these "eyewitness accounts," which they obtained through one of their representatives in Europe, probably overwhelmed their critical faculties. In a letter to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, who was officially responsible for the publication of the WRB Report, the American journalist Oswald F. Schuette declared that these accounts were so unbelievable that Stim[96]son would not have sanctioned their publication had he actually read them, and urged that they be reappraised.[234] Is it any wonder that the WRB Report was relegated to obscurity after the war?[235]

For lack of space, we cannot give here a detailed analysis of the various accounts in the WRB Report, with all their contradictions and absurdities. Hence we must limit ourselves to a few of the most important points.

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[233] See Vrba, *op. cit.*, pp. 271ff. The International Red Cross in Geneva is supposed to have received a copy of the report in June 1944. (Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 622). A delegation which was sent to Auschwitz following this, in September, did not discover any "gas chambers." See the Red Cross Report, pp. 91f., as well as my treatment of this in *Mensch und Maß*, series 22/1975.

[234] The exact wording of this letter can be read in Aretz, *op. cit.*, pp. 366ff.

[235] Butz takes the position that the WRB Report was fabricated by American officials in collabouration with Jewish officials, and that portions of the report, attributed to former Birkenau prisoners, do not stem from them. He makes a number of good points, which I had not the opportunity to verify, in support of his position. In the end result, it makes no difference whether the officials of the WRB and other offices were deceived, or whether they themselves took part in drafting the report. Regarding questions about the origin and importance of the WRB-Report, see Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 89ff

Vrba and Wetzler state that SS-Obersturmbannfilhrer Rudolf Höss was "camp commandant" at a time when he had already left Auschwitz. Höss was replaced by SS-Sturmbannführer Arthur Liebehenschel in November 1943, long before their escape in April 1944. He, in turn, was replaced by SS-Sturmbannführer Richard Baer.[236] (When Baer died in detention shortly before the beginning of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965, an event that gave rise to much speculation, one of the most important witnesses to Auschwitz was forever silenced).[237] Even the pair of Jews whose account supplements Vrba and Wetzler's report have nothing to say about these last two commandants of Auschwitz. Of the men in the series of "commandants" they mention, all except Höss were actually just subordinates.

It is remarkable how little information the WRB Report contains about the physical structure of the camp, and most of that is highly contradictory, although the persons who allegedly wrote these accounts should have been very well acquainted with the layout of the camp in which they had supposedly been held for years. The sketches of the layout that are appended to their accounts correspond neither to their own descriptions of the camp nor to the ground-plans exhibited today.[238] They completely ignore the rather conspicuous fact that the Auschwitz parent camp consisted in part of the brick buildings of an old army barracks. The sketches also do not note this. In the sketch of Birkenau (Part 1, p. 22), there is a bath between crematoria II and III, but according to the ground-plans presented today, this spot was occupied by a filtration plant and the clothing storage area "Canada."[239] Although Vrba claims to have worked in the "clearance squad," he evidently was not familiar with the inmate slang term "Canada." He and Wetzler never use this expression in their report.

A particularly striking blunder is to be found in the Polish Major's report. In several passages of his account Birkenau is equated with Raisko, though these were two different camps, separated from each other by about 5 kilometers. When this "authority" tells us that Raisko was the "Polish name" for Birkenau, he is simply demonstrating his ignorance of the facts (see Part 2, pp. 12 and 17).

In various passages of their report, Vrba and Wetzler discuss the transfer of Jews from Lublin-Maidanek to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where they were allegedly gassed and burnt in the "birch woods." Since these people are said to have been transferred to Auschwitz in May and June [97] of 1942, one may well ask why they were not killed at the various camps in the environs of Lublin, where facilities for gassing were allegedly in operation already. According to the current official version of the Auschwitz legend, the first

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[236] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 484 and 515.

[237] See Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 116ff. Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 58; Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug...*, pp. 132ff.

[238] That is not to say that the ground-plans exhibited today are correct in every sense. In part they vary from one another.

[239] See the plans in Langbein's *Der Auschwitz Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 929ff. Smolen's plan (*op. cit.*, inside back cover) agrees with this for the most part; only the filtration plant between the crematorium III and "Canada" is missing. In his plans of the camp a "sauna" appears above the clotlüng depot Tanada. " In the WRB-Report, by the way, the crematoria are designated as 1-IV, while they are numbered II-V in the plans of Langbein and Smolen. At present, Smolen's plan can pass for the "official" one; it also agrees with the plan of Auschwitz-Birkenau published by the Polish "*Schutzrat*" [Protective Council] in *Stätten des Kampfes und des Martyriums 1939-1945*.

"gassings" of Jews at Auschwitz were experimental A affairs carried out in converted farm houses.[240] None of the accounts in the WRB Report mention these makeshift gas chambers. Vrba and Wetzlar only say that prisoners selected for gassing were executed in a large barrack in a birch forest near the Birkenau camp, and their corpses burnt in an adjacent incineration pit (Part 1, p. 9).

Thus there is no end to the contradictions in the WRB Report. Each part of it cancels out something that is stated in another. Despite its glaring inconsistencies, the story about mass incinerations of corpses in the birch woods has outlived most of the stuff in the WRB Report. That these holocausts in the middle of the woods never resulted in a forest fire is another one of the marvels one regularly encounters in the literature on the camps. Incidentally, according to the memoirs of Rudolf Höss, a carefully "edited" document we shall scrutinize later on, the incinerations did not take place in the birch woods.

Let us conclude with a few words about the crematoria and "gas chambers" of Birkenau. This is the camp that really figures in the literature on our topic as the "death factory." The most interesting part of the WRB Report is doubtless that which concerns these facilities. More than anything else, it shows how untrustworthy the document is. We shall deal with this part of the WRB Report when we consider the subsequent testimony on this subject. Here we must limit ourselves to a few brief remarks on the claims regarding completion of work on these facilities.

According to Vrba and Wetzler, the first "modern" crematorium with a "gassing plant" went into operation at the end of February 1943. Although they do not specify when any of the other crematoria were constructed, they remark that "at present" —that is to say, at the time of their escape in April 1944— four crematoria with adjoining "gas chambers" were in use, and even describe their appearance and mode of operation in some detail. A ground-plan of such a facility is appended to their report (Part 1, pp. 14ff.).

According to the Polish Major, however, four crematoria were already operative in autumn 1942. This "witness" also claims that, beginning in spring 1942, gassings took place in large "special barracks." Evidently he was unaware of any incineration pit in the birch woods.

Thus even on the vital point of the completion of the crematoria and "gas chambers" the WRB Report is inconsistent. That this document lacks the force of proof is shown by the fact that it was not presented in evidence at the Nuremberg trials or at any of the Auschwitz trials German courts have conducted. Of course, Vrba and Wetzler were called as witnesses in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, but the WRB Report itself [98] was never brought up there. Nor did the court ask them for details about the crematoria and "gas chambers." After all, the existence of gas chambers at Auschwitz was regarded as a "proven fact of contemporary history." This grave error of judicial procedure will be discussed further in our account of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. Today this trial is widely believed to have proved that gas chambers

[240] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 416; Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 166. Reitlinger speaks of 'barns."

existed at Auschwitz-Birkenau[241] — a charge that hardly anyone credited before then. Given the nature of the argumentation in those procedings, that belief seems more than a little off the track.

It should be clear now why the picture of Auschwitz-Birkenau drawn by Vrba and Wetzler — not to mention the cryptic Polish Major and the other pair of Jews — could not be incorporated into the post-war version of the Auschwitz legend: Their account simply contains too much that is self-contradictory and grossly improbable. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that their collection of horror stories did provide the framework of the legend, as well as such embellishments as the four crematoria with the special gas chambers. Since their account to some extent shows the genesis of the gas chamber legend, we had to deal with it here. As for the rest of the WRB Report, it has not been "forgotten" without reason.

"Buried Manusctipts"

In their book *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner tell us that in November 1953 a "notebook was dug up which contains fragments of a chronicle in Yiddish".[242] They do not reveal exactly where it was discovered or who the author was. In a note to their excerpts from this "manuscript," they merely state that it was unearthed "on the grounds of the Auschwitz camp with the aid of instructions from survivors." The original document is now at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, which published the "chronicle" in the January-June 1954 issue of its bulletin. It appears that even Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner have not seen the original manuscript, and merely copied the text from the bulletin.

Presumably this document has not been examined and authenticated by any scholars outside the Soviet bloc - as is usually the case with "finds" of this sort - for Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner certainly would not have failed to mention its authentication. Since the custodians of the Yiddish manuscript apparently dare not submit it to independent experts, who might readily expose it as a forgery, one must consider it a highly questionable document. That there is good reason to view documents from the Soviet bloc with extreme distrust was substantiated by the testimony of the Polish exile Jan Pawlowski in a recent trial before the Higher Regional Court at Frankfurt. Pawlowski testified that the Polish Ministry of the Interior, for instance, has a team of experts who specialize in fabricating "evidence" and "documents."[243]
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However, from the passages quoted by Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner, it is obvious that the "chronicle" is a forgery, and a quite clumsy one at that. For it describes events that must not only be seen as completely impossible, but which in part at least could not possibly have been observed by the author of the "manuscript."

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[241] Especially from the "official" side: compare insert B 1976 of the weekly paper *Das Parlament* (essentially identical with the *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, Heft 2/1976, pp. 105ff.) which was published by members of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte. On this see my writing *Das Institut für Zeitgeschichte-eine Schwindelfirma?*

[242] See also Langbein, *Menschen in Auschwitz*, p. 222.

[243] Attomey Dr. Peter Gast in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 136 of June 16, 1975, p. 7 (letter to the editor).

For example, according to one passage, SS-Hauptscharführer Otto Moll was in the habit of placing four people in a row and then felling them all with a single bullet, a feat right out of the tales of Baron von Münchhausen. Those who ducked were cast into a bonfire that was evidently kept burning just for that purpose. What an ingenious addition to the Auschwitz legend!

Another passage relates an incident that occurred during the gassing of a group of Poles and Dutch Jews. In the "gas chamber," a Polish girl delivered an "impassioned speech," exhorting the "assembled Jews" to avenge the Poles. Profoundly moved, the Poles knelt and sang the Polish national anthem, in their last moments full of hope for the future of their nation. With that, everyone - including the assembled Jews? - burst into the *Internationale*, and died "amidst song in the ecstasy of dreams of universal brotherhood and a better tomorrow."

This is quite a yam. The bit about the inmates dying "amidst the strains of the *Internationale*" betrays the Communist origins of this schmalz — an impromptu May Day pageant in the "gas chamber"! Since the Poles are inveterate Jew-baiters, the notion that Jews would avenge the Poles is downright grotesque. To a large extent, it was Polish Jew-baiting that the Germany of the 1920's had to thank for its inundation with Eastern Jews. No sooner had the Third Reich fallen than anti-Jewish pogroms of the most grievous kinds broke out in Poland."[244] Anyway, how could the Jews avenge their Polish "brothers" if, as we are told, they were gassed along with them? And how did the phantom chronicler find out everything that was said and done in the "gas chamber"? Unless this "chronicle" is a message from the hereafter, he could not have been inside the "gas chamber" himself. The reader can only shake his head at such unabashed lying. That it was presented to the German public in a volume purporting to be a collection of source material on recent history must break some kind of record for audacity.

But there is more. This "document" reports that Jewish deportees from Slovakia were killed in the gas chamber at the end of 1944. Since the "chronicle" is dated November 26, 1944, and the author tells us that he, too, was about to be gassed, he must have learnt of the gassing of these deportees after his demise. Perhaps the "chronicle" is indeed a message from beyond the grave!

The "chronicle" is not only self-contradictory, but also at variance with other documents and testimony. Its author maintains that the walls of crematorium III were "razed" on October 14, 1944, and the "razing of the walls of crematorium I" began on November 25, 1944. After that, [100] crematorium II was to be demolished, but first a motor which served to "pump out air" and the "pipes" would be removed and shipped to the Mauthausen or Gross-Rosen camp. To quote the "chronicle":

> "Since they [the motor and pipes] could be used only for wholesale gassings, for which crematoria III and IV lacked the equipment, the suspicion arises that the same facilities for exterminating Jews had been constructed at the previously mentioned camps."

If this information is correct, there were no extermination facilities in crematoria III and IV. But numerous post-war accounts, as well as the War Refugee Board Report, state exactly the opposite. Moreover, some "witnesses"

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[244] According to a statement under oath by the Jewish witness Zissmann, the Poles are supposed to have murdered approximately one million Jews after the retreat of the German troops in 1945: *Nation Europa*, 8/1952, p. 65; Roth, *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher?*, pp., 110f.

have claimed that gassing facilities existed at Mauthausen long before 1944.[245] Of course, it is now an indisputable historical fact that nobody was ever gassed at any camp in the German Reich proper, including Mauthausen.

These dates for the ostensible destruction of the crematoria do not correspond to those given in other parts of Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's volume. According to the chronological table on page 385, Himmler supposedly ordered the destruction of gas chambers and crematoria on November 26, 1944, the very day the "chronicle" was allegedly completed. The Yiddish chronicler must have had a prophetic vision of Himmler issuing that order! In his foreword to *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, Hermann Langbein tells us that at the end of November aft gas chambers and crematoria were "blown up by the SS" — not "razed" or "dismantled." However, Primo Levi, whose account is printed in the same volume, says it was prisoners in the *Sonderkommando* who "blew up one of the crematoria" in November. According to the chronological table, the *Sonderkommando* destroyed a crematorium - supposedly crematorium IV - on October 7, 1944, and it was arson, not an explosion. Combining both versions, a certain Israel Gutman insists that crematorium IV was set afire and blown up during a mutiny of the *Sonderkommando*, though he does not specify when that occurred. On the other hand, in Kazimierz Smolen's little book *Auschwitz: 1940-1945* we read that during this mutiny — once again, no date is given, — crematorium III was set afire and crematorium IV only *damaged*.[246] According to the same publication, crematorium II and III were not demolished by the SS until January 20, 1945, and crematorium V was destroyed on the nights of January 25 and 26, 1945. However, Otto Wolken, a former Birkenau inmate whose account begins on January 17, 1945, says that he knows only of the destruction of crematorium V, which he claims was blown up on the nights of January 23 and 24, 1945.[247] The former SS man Pery Broad gives a totally different version. He says that *all* the "buildings in which the greatest mass murder in the history of mankind had been carried out" were blown up in January 1945, because of the Russian advance.[248]

Here we have a maze of contradictions, and all that can be said for cer[101]tain is that not only is this "buried manuscript" highly dubious, but so are these other accounts. To add to the confusion, a certain Bernhard Klieger tells us that four crematoria cum "gas chambers" were torn down in the winter of 1944-1945, the site levelled and covered with a plot of grass. Only a fifth crematorium remained to serve the daily needs of the camp.[249] Perhaps there

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[245] There is the so-called *Beichte des Lagerkommandanten von Mauthausen SS-Standartenführers Ziereis* [Confession of SS-Standartenführer Ziereis, the Mauthausen Camp Commandant] which is obviously a falsified "document" extorted by means of torture. According to this, 11/2 million prisoners were "destroyed by gas" in this camp. See Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug...*, pp. 97f. and Rothe, *op. cit.*, pp. 21ff. Reitlinger refers to this "confession" as not «very dependable" (*op. cit.*, p. 538).

[246] *Auschwitz 1940-1945*, p. 81. Kasimierz Smolen is director of the State Auschwitz Museum in Poland.

[247] Communication of the International Federation of Resistance Fighters, Nr. 5/1974, p. 7. The report is also printed in the Polish Anthology (*op. cit.*, vol. 1, part 1).

Regarding Wolken see Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutchlands*, vol. 4, pp. 168f.

[248] Broad Report, p. 88.

[249] Klieger, *Der Weg, den wir gingen*, pp. 51f.

was only one crematorium all along. How could a plot of grass be planted in the middle of winter?

But let us return to the Yiddish "chronicle," which poses other riddles. At the conclusion of this document, the author informs us of the various places where he hid other copies of his manuscript. One was allegedly placed in a bone pit in crematorium I". Yet earlier he told us that this crematorium was torn down on November 25, 1944, the day before he finished his "chronicle." An additional copy is said to have been hidden "in a pile of bones" on the south side of the yard of crematorium I. And he claims to have buried still other copies "under the ashes in crematorium II," which, according to his previous statements, also was to be demolished.

All this leads us back to the question: Where was the manuscript published by the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw discovered? It seems to be the only "find" of this sort thus far. The alleged hiding places are as mysterious as they are unbelievable. No bones are left after cremation, nor are ashes usually permitted to accumulate in crematoria. Since the exact location of the hiding places can no longer be determined, and the things that allegedly mark them are so subject to change, new "finds" could be made nearly anywhere on the Auschwitz grounds. Perhaps we shall soon be hearing more about the "discovery" of "missing" manuscripts. There is already some indication of this. In the Viennese magazine *Profil*, a certain Walfried Reismann writes:

> Every now and then, mouldering manuscripts are discovered, which prisoners in the *Sonderkommando*s (who attended the crematoria and gas chambers) buried in bottles, preserving jars, and tins for posterity. The evaluation of these writings, which will not be completed until 1980, will provide the first well-rounded, scholarly picture of Auschwitz-Birkenau...[250]

So we shall have to wait until 1980 — even though the forgery workshops are presumably working at full speed on these "documents." After all, the forgers must take into account the increasingly weighty objections of impartial scholars to the existence of the alleged gas chambers. It is no longer as easy to forge such documents as it was, say, twenty or thirty years ago. And people will, in any case, be more sceptical of such "finds" than they were before.

Photographic "Documents"

Many of the works on the anti-Jewish measures of the Third Reich contain photographs illustrating their theme. To be sure, pictures of [102] Auschwitz are relatively uncommon, and the ones presented in those works are without the slightest probative value, so far as the "extermination function" of the camp is concerned. Most frequently depicted are the wrought-iron main gate of the so-called parent camp, with its scrollwork motto "Arbeit macht frei" ("Work makes one free"), which points to the real function of the camp; a few barracks; and parts of the surrounding fence. None of these pictures gives any indication that Auwschwitz was an "extermination camp." One searches in vain for photographic documents which might elucidate the conflicting statements about the crematoria and "gas chambers," and specifically, prove the latter did exist.

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[250] Cited after *Denk mit!*, series 3/1975, p. 59.

A possible explanation for the dearth of photographic evidence is, of course, that taking pictures was forbidden. But experience proves that such a ban would in fact encourage picture-taking. Members of the resistance movement in Auschwitz, which is said to have been very well organized, reportedly smuggled their secretly made photos out of the camp. It is even reported that the Central Construction Office of the SS and Police in Auschwitz made photographs of the "extermination facilities," right after their completion, and exhibited them in the anteroom of a crematorium, so proud was it of this accomplishment.[251] These pictures are also lost — that is, if they ever existed. Given the total absence of pictorial evidence for the presence of "extermination facilities" at the camp, one may rightly suspect there was nothing in Auschwitz to photograph which would corroborate this atrocity story, except for one or more crematoria of the kind used for the disposal of he dead in every large city. Had "extermination facilities" existed, the illegal prisoners organization would surely have done its utmost to obtain pictorial evidence of them, and, if successful, hidden it in a secure place. That this last point does not rest on idle speculation is substantiated by someone who should know, Kazimierz Smolen, the Director of the Polish State Auschwitz Museum. From his booklet *Auschwitz: 1940-1945*, an "official" source, as it were, we learn that prisoners were indeed able to make "illegal" photographs at Auschwitz. Smolen relates hat the "resistance movement" sent pictures of "gassings" out of the camp in 1944, together with a "scrap of paper" containing this message:

> Urgent. Send 2 metal rolls of film for 6 x 9 camera without delay. There exists a possibility of taking pictures. We are sending you pictures of Birkenau - of a gassing. One shot is of a funeral pyre outdoors, where corpses are burnt because the crematoria cannot cope with the incineration of the dead. In front of the funeral pyre are corpses which will later be cast into it. The other shot shows one of the places in the woods where people disrobe, ostensibly to take a bath. Instead, they are gassed. Send the rolls immediately! Dispatch the enclosed photos to Tell at once. –We are of the opinion that the enlargements should be forwarded.

It is highly probable that the photos described here are identical with [103] the two plates in Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte* (pp. 341f.); which bear the following captions:

> When the ovens of the crematoria could not keep pace, prisoners in the *Sonderkommando* had to bum corpses on funeral pyres.
>
> The next victims waited in a small woods until the gas chamber was ventilated.

The picture of the burning funeral pyre with the corpses in the foreground appears in the literature on our topic more frequently than the other picture does. Walendy calls this picture a fake.[252] But it is at least proof that corpses were being incinerated outdoors someplace, though where remains a mystery, since it lacks any point of reference. In our bombed-out cities, one recalls, the bodies of air-raid victims frequently had to be disposed of in this manner.[253] Nothing in the second picture bears out the allegation that the people depicted were "Waiting to be gassed," as the caption has it. What is more, the note from the "resistance movement" claiming that victims had to

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[251] Broad Report, p. 67. Broad stated this also in his testimony of October 20, 1947 (Nuremberg Document NI-11984), published by Schoenberner in *Wir haben es gesehen*, pp. 277.

[252] *Bild-"Dokumente" für die Geschichtsschreibung?,* pp. 38f. See also Walendy, *Europa in Flammen*, vol. II, pp. 40f. (picture supplement).

[253] See for example Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden*, p. 145.

undress in the woods conflicts with the usual story that proportionately spacious "disrobing rooms" adjoined the "gas chambers."

These are not the only photographs that are represented in the literature as photos taken illegally by prisoners. The other pictures are no more credible as proof that an extermination program existed than are the two mentioned above. Precise information about the source of such photographs is never given. If prisoners belonging to the resistance movement really had the opportunity to take pictures, it is utterly incomprehensible that there is not a single photograph of even the exterior of the Birkenau crematoria, which are supposed to have been rather close to each other and would have been visible from afar because of their tall and massive chimneys. Granted it would have been difficult to photograph the interior of the legendary subterranean "gas chambers." But why did not inmates at least photograph one of those crematoria which are said to have had adjoining "gas chambers" aboveground?[254]

In the Polish State Auschwitz Museum, there are supposedly photos of two different types of crematoria, one having a single chimney, the other two chimneys (I cannot locate these pictures in any of the standard works on the subject. Why are they being withheld?). In some books, merely a "crematorium under construction" is depicted, allegedly an "illegal" photo some prisoner made.[255] It shows a partially completed stone building with a chimney-like smokestack of not very large proportions. To judge by the relative size of the people shown in the photo, this building was not as large as the usual descriptions of the Birkenau crematoria would cause one to expect. The photo could have been taken anywhere. Nothing in the photo identifies it with Birkenau or any other concentration camp. As with most of these photos, we are not told when [104] and under what circumstances it was made, or given any other information necessary for its evaluation. Yet even if this were an authentic picture of a crematorium, that would not in itself prove the people whose corpses were cremated there had been gassed to death.

But this point, which cannot be overemphasized, applies more so to the numerous pictures of cremation ovens, where we also find evidence of chicanery. For example, the very same photograph of a cremation oven is sometimes described as having been taken in Dachau, at other times in Birkenau.[256] A row of about five cremation ovens shown in another picture is identified in some "documentary works" as the "cremation ovens" of Birkenau, in others as those of Maidanek.[257] One could go on with such comparison, but it

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[254] That such "gas chambers" existed is, in any case, claimed: See for instance Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 167, and the allegedly most important source, the autobiography *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 160, which is attributed to the former Auschwitz commandant, R. Höss.

[255] See for example Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *Auschwitz-Zeugnisse und Berichte*, p. 335.

[256] Walendy, *Bild-«Dokumente" für die Geschichtsschreibung?*, p. 66, and *Europa in Flammen*, vol. II, p. 52 of the picture supplement.

[257] See on one hand *Faschismus-Ghetto-Massenmord*, p. 364, and on the other Schönberner, *Der gelbe Stern*, p. 152. *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 18 of April 25, 1977 (p. 55) titles the picture "Krematorien von Maidanek" doubtless in consideration of the Maidanek trial, which was taking place at that time in Düsseldorf.

is hardly worth the effort. Swindles employing genuine or spurious photographs are nothing new in the field of atrocity propaganda.[258]

Yet another story are the photographs of the old crematorium and "gas chamber" in the Auschwitz parent camp. As noted earlier, this building and everything inside it were put into their present state after the war, by the creators of the Polish State Auschwitz Museum (see p. 51 above). When this crematorium was shut down in July 1943, the building was converted into an air-raid shelter, with an operating room for the SS sick-bay. At that time, the chimney was razed. I have in my possession an unpublished photo which shows the back of this building in its present state. One can readily see that the "restored" chimney is purely window-dressing. It is not even attached to the structure. Likewise, the "gas chamber" is simply a prop in the show.

In some of the literature there are photographs of the remains of the foundations of crematoria II and III, or, rather, what are now exhibited as such to Auschwitz Museum tourists. The captions tell the viewer what he is supposed to see, for instance: "Birkenau, Ruins of the Gas Chambers and Crematorium II."[259] If only because of its size, the rubble pictured could not be the ruins of one or more "gas chambers" that each had a capacity of 2,000 to 3,000 people.[260] One cannot even tell whether his débris is actually the remnant of a crematorium.

If four gigantic crematoria really existed at Birkenau, they would have left behind a proportionately large expanse of ruins. One would expect he Soviet occupation forces to have made as many photographs as possible of this testimony in stone to an extermination program that allegedly claimed 12,000 to 20,000 victims daily. Yet no photos of such massive ruins seem to exist.

To be sure, Professor Nicolai Alexeiev, the Russian witness in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965, testified that Soviet archives contain additional photo-documents on Auschwitz.[261] However, these are probably the same photographs the Soviet prosecution placed in evidence at the Nuremberg IMT trial (They form an appendix to Nuremberg Document 2430-PS.[262] That the Soviets should have withheld [105] from the international public such significant documents on the largest "extermination camp" is quite unlikely. None of the photographs they presented at Nuremberg has the slightest probative value (I am assuming that all the photos they submitted were reproduced in the "Documents in Evidence" section of the published trial record). Not one of these photos shows a great expanse of ruins at Birkenau, if such a thing existed. The pictures mainly show barracks, fences, prisoners, piles of corpses, bundles of clothing, and other things that have no validity as proof

[258] See Walendy, *Bild-"Dokumente" für die Geschichtsschreibung* and *Europa in Flammen*, picture supplement. As early as World War I, there were in existence whole agencies the entire task of which was to fabricate gruesome photographs of atrocities and corpses, including photomontages of piles of bodies.

[259] Smolen, *op. cit.*, pp. 96, 104.

[260] Smolen, typically, writes of a mere 2,000 people who were supposedly jammed into a room of 210 square meters in order to be gassed there (*op. cit.*, p. 24). Thus there would have been 10 people in one square meter. Any commentary would be superfluous.

[261] See *Mensch und Maß*, series 9/1971, pp. 407f.; there a report on the trial by Bernd Naumann in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 259 of November 6, 1964, is referred to.

[262] IMT XXX, 359ff.

of the alleged mass gassings.[263] Nuremberg Document 2430-PS does include a photograph of cremation ovens. It was presented in evidence not by the Soviet, but by the French prosecution team.[264] Its only caption is "Fours crématoires" ("Cremation ovens"). We may be sure that these are not the Auschwitz ovens. Otherwise, the Soviet prosecution would have introduced the picture. Here one should remember that the Soviet Union was the only one of the victorious Allied powers that was in the position to present any kind of evidential material on Auschwitz, since no Western investigators or journalists were permitted to explore the Auschwitz camp and its environs and conduct inquiries (see p. 7 above).

It may not be amiss to note how the German Reich handled the discovery of mass graves of Polish officers in the Katyn forest. In contrast to the Soviet policy on Auschwitz, the German Government enabled journalists and experts from all over the world to make an on-thespot investigation of this crime and allowed them to take photographs. Why didn't the Soviets do likewise in the case of Auschwitz?

None of this augurs well for the credibility of the photographic "evidence" on the Birkenau "death factory." The standard works on the subject attempt to make up for this deficiency with photographs of such vaguely circumstantial evidence for the gassing thesis as mountains of shoes, tons of human hair compacted into bales, piles of shaving brushes, rings, spectacles, and dentures that were allegedly taken from murdered Jews.[265] Udo Walendy describes these photographs, which for the most part were not made public until long after the war, as photographic "drawings," that is to say, composite photos fabricated in the darkroom.[266] However, the articles depicted in them are reportedly on display for tourists at the chamber of horrors known as the Auschwitz Museum. They are seemingly immune to the ravages of time — perhaps they are replaced when necessary. Be that as it may, exhibits or pictures of such articles prove little or nothing. That also goes for pictures of

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[263] Noteworthy are the pictured "child prisoners" (*op. cit.*, p. 367), who appear to be quite well-nourished. See also the pictures of "children prisoners" taken from a Soviet source published in the newsletter *Denk mit!*, series 3/1975, pp. 56f. These should adequately dispose of the gruesome fairytales about the terrible hunger suffered by the prisoners of Auschwitz. For if children who were not working were sufficiently fed, then the working prisoners would hardly be starved. 1 myself can attest to the fact that on all my surprise or unannounced visits to Auschwitz during 1944, I never encountered an undernourished prisoner. Thies Christophersen says the same in his report, *Die Auschwitz-Lüge*. Sceptics are strongly encouraged to read this report. There are photographs of undernourished prisoners from the camps in the Old Reich. This can be explained in that, especially during the last months of the war, the food supply to the camps could not be maintained due to the ceaseless bombing attacks by the Allied air forces. The prisoners' lot was shared more or less with the entire German civilian population.

The child prisoners who were found alive by the Soviet Army on the capture of Auschwitz are an important proof against the constantly repeated statement - made again at the Auschwitz trial - that children were regularly gassed together with their mothers upon their arrival in Birkenau.

[264] IMT XX, 425. Some of the Nuremberg photo-documents, including these, can be found in Aroneanu, *op. cit.* (Nuremberg Document F-321). The crematoria pictured could have been photographed in any cemetery crematorium.

[265] Compare Schnabel, *op. cit.*, pp. 244, 245, 247, 259, 260; Mazur, *Wir haben es nicht vergessen*, pp. 100f. It is noticeable that almost none of these photographs was able to be subrrätted at the IMT trial. Everyone may draw his own conclusions from that.

[266] *Bild-"Dokumente" für die Geschichtsschreibung?*, pp. 57ff., and *Europa in Flammen*, vol. 11, picture supplement pages 42ff.

corpses. Unless some relation between these things and the alleged mass gassings can be demonstrated, they are not valid evidence. Such a relationship has never been established, and can hardly be now, after four decades. The question arises: Why didn't the Soviets, directly after they occupied the camp, make arrangements to secure unimpeachable evidence of what actually happened at the place, enlisting the coopera[106]tion of impartial scholars and journalists? Instead, they kept the grounds of the former concentration camp hermetically sealed for more than ten years. No doubt they knew what they were doing.

We are now at the end of this chapter. Our examination of the basic contemporaneous documents presented in the literature on the Auschwitz camp has shown that none of them, either alone or in conjunction with others, provides so much as an indication that systematic extermination of Jews took place at Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is not surprising, then, that the extermination mythologists rely heavily on witness testimony, most of which, significantly, did not come to the surface until after the fall of the Third Reich. We shall deal with this testimony in the next two chapters

Chapter Three

Testimony and Personal Accounts

Eyewitness testimony and reports of personal experience of every kind are, as a rule, dependent on many factors, which influence more or less strongly their truthfulness. Aside from the well-known fact that the capacity of human beings to remember is limited, just as is men's ability to observe and recount correctly events occurring before their very eyes, eyewitness testimony is in most cases even more dependent on feelings and various external influences that produce a reconstruction of what happened that deviates from reality, or even a distorted reconstruction of what happened. Descriptions of experience that are completely true to reality and unobjectionable in every respect are thus rarities. As a rule, the best that can be expected from testimony can be said to have been attained when at least the gist of what happened is recounted correctly.[267]

It would be unrealistic to try to consider the accounts of personal experiences in regard to the German concentration camps, especially the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, in a different context. On the contrary, here additional, extraordinary factors come into play, which force on one critical distance and meticulous consideration of the individual details communicated in all testimony of this kind. We must also consider in all these descriptions of personal experiences not only all the doubts involved, but also take into account the particular motives which make it seem advisable not to accept blindly these testimonies as true in every respect, as usually happens, but to examine them thoroughly.

All such reports must be received with special caution, because their authors were in one way or another involved in the events themselves. Experience shows that witnesses of this kind have, for the most varied reasons, a personal interest in gaining credence for their version of what happened, which they try to accomplish through their stories. If onetime concentration camp inmates express feelings of hatred and revenge toward their former guards, and also give sign of political motives, as [108] has been the case with the majority of them, one must scrutinize their testimony very carefully to find the kernel of truth in it, if indeed there is any.[268] This applies especially when

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[267] Hellwig has given a very clear account, with many examples, in his book *Psychologie und Vernehmungstechnik bei Tatbestandsermittlungen* [Psychology and Interrogation Technique in Case Investigation].

[268] In his book *Falsehood in Wartime* (pp. 125ff.), Ponsonby observes regarding "witness testimonies" as to alleged German atrocities in World War I: "At best, human witness accounts are unreliable even about everyday occurrences of no importance. However, when prejudice, passion, emotion, and so-called patriotism confuse the mind, a personal account becomes worthless." Here he addresses a problem that has to be taken into account constantly when dealing with former

gassing and gas chambers are the subject under discussion, that is to say, the matter that is the object of our investigation.

In considering most descriptions of this kind we are dealing with a type of witness who, although he has not seen gassings or gas chambers himself, is nevertheless willing to report on the subject. Such "hear-say witnesses" are as numerous as grains of sand on the beach. Since their testimony and reports are based on knowledge gained at secondor even third-hand, the testimony of these witnesses should be worthless not only to jurists, but also to historians. Nevertheless, some of them will be quoted in the appropriate place, to show how readily, not to say brazenly, camp rumours (or possibly even their own fictions) have been and are being passed off as the truth, although they have all the earmarks, as it were, of incredibility.

Many of these witnesses represent as their own experience that which they have not experienced at all. Here we are dealing with the previously mentioned Odysseus Complex, a form of the generally harmless tendency to bombastic exaggeration, i.e., to exaggerated depictions of one's own experiences. This concept is derived from the "great endurer" Odysseus, the Hellenic prince who —as the ancient poet Homer recounts in the Odyssey— was, thanks to the most harrowing adventures, unable to return home from Troy until after ten years of wandering. The improbable events in the wanderings of this legendary Greek hero, as described by Homer, symbolize the tendency, probably inherent in most people, to exaggerate one's own painful experiences. Although this tendency is understandable, when it degenerates into gross lying, as has been demonstrated of countless concentration camp "experiences" it cannot be condemned too strongly, especially if it includes making false accusations of mass murder.

An impressive example of this has been reported by Rassinier, who, as a French resistance fighter during the Second World War, spent almost two years in the Buchenwald and Dora concentration camps. Despite his own hard experience, he, as a historian dedicated to truth, distanced himself with disgust from what he himself called the boundless exaggerations of the concentration camp literature of the post-war era. In this connection, he reports, inter alia, of his former fellow prisoner, one Abbé Renard, who wrote the following in his experience report on Buchenwald: "I saw thousands and thousands go into the showers, from which suffocating gas instead of water flowed." When told by Rassinier in early 1947 that there were no gas chambers at all in Buchenwald, as every inmate of this camp must have known, Renard is said to have replied: "Of course, but that is just a figure of speech, and since these things happened somewhere, it is of no importance."[269]

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If this man of the cloth, to whom love of truth should have been the deepest concern, shamelessly treated the truth with such frivolity, and believed that he could represent what he knew to be a lie as a "figure of speech" simply because it corresponded to current rumours, what is one to make of the other "witnesses to gassings" most of whom could not measure up to the abbé either in their intellectual level or their claim to morality? Other "witnesses" are

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concentration camp inmates. Among Jewish witnesses the factor of patriotism finds a corresponding notion in the "chosen people" concept.

[269] *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, p. 154; as well as *Was ist Wahrheit?*, p. 86.

obviously not so easily exposed as liars as he was. Usually they can be recognized as liars only because their allegations do not correspond to reality, since they contain technical, physical, or sundry other impossibilities. Not infrequently, they entangle themselves in contradictions, aside from the fact that not one of these testimonies is in agreement on every essential point with the others. We shall establish this in detail in the case of the principal "eyewitnesses."

In the course of the various post-war trials, testimony about gas chambers in Auschwitz was supplied by witnesses who expected appropriate testimony to *guarantee them advantages or spare them disadvantages*. It also has been proven that not only witnesses, but also defendants, were subjected to many different kinds of pressure in order to elicit testimony of a certain kind. A favourite pressure tactic of the Western prosecutors in the so-called war-crimes trials was to threaten witnesses or defendants with being handed over to the Soviet Russians or Poles if they did not declare themselves ready to "cooperate" with the prosecution.[270] The Allies did not even recoil from physical torture,[271] even though psychological torture probably played a greater role in obtaining the desired testimony in all the trials. Among the varieties of psychological torture was harassment which in a more refined form —if necessary, supported with drugs— is well-known under the name of *brainwashing*. The absolute

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[270] See particularly the works of Freda Utley (p. 172) and Maurice Bardèche (*Nürnberg oder die Falschmünzer*, pp. 88ff.). Refer also to Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 3, pp. 138ff., as well as Roth, *Was geschah nach 1942*, part 2, pp. 72ff. The sworn testimony of a former translator with the American War Crimes Group in Dachau, Jost Walter Schneider, is quite informative: See *Das Siegertribunal*, pp. 65ff. This testimony was presented by Attorney Engelhardt at the 1976 congress on modern history of the Gesellschaft für Freie Publizistik.

By "cooperating" with the prosecution former SS-Standartenführer Kurt Becher was apparently able to "buy his freedom." He testified to the extermination of Jews in "gas chambers" although he himself had never personally witnessed such a thing. See Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?*, p. 94, footnote 29. The same could be said regarding foreign ministry officials von Thadden, Horst Wagner, and others. See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 158ff.

It has been proved that the former U.S. prosecutor at Nuremberg, Robert M. W. Kempner, used methods of intimidation against the accused. On this see besides Butz, *op. cit.*, Kern, *Deutschland im Abgrund*, p. 314, cited by Heinz Roth, *Was geschah nach 1942*, part 2, p. 63. See also the report, "US-Ankläger Kempner schwer belastet" in *Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung* (DWZ) Nr. 8/1973 of February 23, 1973.

Pressure was exerted on the accused and on witnesses, not only by lower courts. The circumstances of that time —even witnesses were imprisoned, in the so-called witness wing of the Nuremberg court building— were such that sooner or later, everyone caught in the mill of mock and terror justice could be worn down. The former torturers are today usually "not traceable": DWZ Nr. 47/1973 of November 23, 1973. They can no longer be brought to justice, according to an agreement between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Allies.

[271] Especially in the Malmedy trial, but also in other trials (Bardèche, *op. cit.*, pp. 106ff.). Significant as well is the widespread mistreatment described by Alan Moorehead in connection with "investigations" in the Belsen trial (compare Heinz Roth, *Was geschah nach 1945?*, part 2, pp. 70f.; further Nation Europa, series 5/1968). "Confessions" were extracted as to gassing in Auschwitz during the Belsen Trial, for example from the former SS leader Kramer, who for a time had been camp commander of Auschwitz (on this Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 175f., and 264ff.).

The Americans were finally forced, due to American public knowledge of this, to appoint a commission to investigate the questionable investigative methods of the Jewish "interrogators. " Freda Utley wrote about this in *The High Cost of Vengeance*. However, no consequences were drawn from the results of this investigation.

On the methods of torture during the Nuremberg trial, see also the remarks of Harwood in *Six Million?*, pp. lOff., as well as Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 7 (*Rachejustiz an Deutschland*).

reliability of such psychological pressure has long ago been proved and recognized.[272] In a milder, though no less effective form, it must have been successful with not a few defendants in the so-called National Socialist Crimes of Violence trials in German courts, since they made confessions that could have no basis in their own knowledge and experience. This point will be probed more deeply in the chapter on the so-called Auschwitz Trial.

Finally, we must not overlook another circumstance in which even basically truth-loving people could bring themselves, in good faith, to attest to the mass gassings of Jews. What is here meant is the phenomenon of *mass suggestion*, which has, without doubt, contributed enormously to the establishment and entrenchment of the gas chamber legends.

The investigation of this phenomenon, in regard to the alleged extermination of Jews in the "gas chambers" of so-called extermination camps, would certainly be a worthwhile task for psychologists and sociologists. For even if exterminations of Jews did take place, it would be unrealistic to assume that the laws of mass suggestion could not have [110] had any influence on the description of the extent and nature of killings of Jews that actually took place. Probably this influence was far greater than one would imagine.

However, it is striking that in all the literature on the concentration camps —aside from the works of Rassinier— not one word on this subject is to be found. Even in the allegedly scholarly sociological work by Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat*, this subject is deliberately overlooked. This book surpasses all other works in this category in its uncritical listing of the most improbable horror stories about the concentration camps. The author does not give the least thought to whether, or to what degree, the stories he has been told are based on actual experience, or whether they are plain lies or the result of mass suggestive inflences which had their basis in camp rumours or sundry other circumstances. One can only be astonished that this work, which is so far removed from all principles of scholarship, gained its author —it is reported— the title of professor.

If one takes into consideration the fact that the purported extermination of Jews cannot be documentarily proved, the effort to make it believable by using as many reports as possible is all too comprehensible. This attempt can, at any rate, be successful only if anything that would cast the slightest doubt on the veracity of such stories when they are recounted is avoided. It is thus thoroughly logical that no critical judgement of the reports and eyewitness testimony is to be found in the standard concentration camp literature, and that the possible effect of mass suggestion in giving rise to such testimonies is usually ignored. Those circles interested in "proving" the extermination of the Jews are certainly aware that exposing this aspect of the problem would be the beginning of the end of the saga of the "Final Solution."

There can, in any case, be no thought of the scholarly objectivity of contemporary historical treatises on the extermination of the Jews that do not even address this problem when they reproduce eyewitness testimony. For reasons of space, only sketchy indications of this problem can be given within the framework of this study, but they demonstrate that such reports, in and of

[272] For example, A.F. Marfeld has written extensively on this in *Der Griff nach der Seele* (see pp. 80ff.).

themselves, cannot be considered acceptable evidence for any gas chamber murders in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In the science of psychology, it has long been acknowledged that individuals, especially when they form part of a mass, are suggestible to a high degree. By means of suggestion, definite feelings or perceptions —as well as definite thought and behaviour patterns —are evoked through deliberate influence on mental processes. This is facilitated by the use of expressive pictures and impressive ideas or slogans, which evoke an emotionally-tinged mental image which is finally experienced in terms of the self.[273] The basis of mass suggestion is frequently rumour, such as arises in camps shut off from the outside world.[274] The basis of such [111] rumours could, in turn, be not only propaganda brought into the camp from the outside, but also certain observations made by individuals in the camp itself, from which the most far-fetched conclusions are drawn and then spread by word of mouth. When finally every inmate of the camp is repeating the rumour as though it were the truth, the mental images thus evoked strengthen it and align certain observations and perceptions in a direction that no longer has anything to do with reality.

The founder of the theory of mass psychology, the French physician, anthropologist, and psychologist Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931), in a special chapter of his fundamental work *The Crowd*[*], discusses the credulity and lability of the masses under the influence of certain incidents and rumours that are no more than vivid self-delusions. According to Le Bon, a scholar who is part of a mass is just as susceptible to them as the simplest person. Le Bon does not use the term "mass suggestion" in this context. Rather, he speaks of "collective hallucinations which appear to have all the classic markings of genuineness, since here we are dealing with apparitions to which thousands of people have attested." (*op. cit.*, p. 27) Although this is nothing more than a partial aspect of the phenomenon of mass suggestion, it is precisely the state of affairs that we shall be considering here.

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[273] *Brockhaus-Enzyklopädie*, vol. 12 (1971), p. 228 (under Masse [Crowd] and vol. 18 (1973), p. 333 (under Suggestion). The psychologists David and Rosa Katz point out that in the study of mass suggestion there are many examples in history of epidemic and pandemic outbreaks based on rumours (*Handbuch der Psychologie*, p. 624). The witch craze of the Middle Ages was without doubt based on mass suggestion, as are all delusory beliefs which find a large dissemination. There are many indications that the belief in "gas chambers" is and was similarly conditioned.

[274] There especially, where people live together in small quarters sharing the same fate, the conditions are such that certain notions and opinions spread among the inmates of such camps with the speed of a prairie fire. Even the most unbelievable rumour very quickly becomes an undisputable fact in the imagination of people who have coalesced into a crowd. This is particularly clear in Kogon's books. Not one of the gruesome tales he describes, page after page, has he experienced himself, and their apparent incredibility does not seem to disturb him.

Dr. Scheidl (*Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 3, p. 147) describes the book *Der SS-Staat* correctly as a "collection of atrocity stories" and as "the greatest collection of garbage which a German ever dumped on the German people." Yet is Kogon a German at all? He seems not to have a clear conscience because he refused to discuss his book publicly with Rassinier, instead threatening him with his attorney. (See *Was nun, Odysseus?,* pp. 35-54).

Nevertheless, several hundred thousand copies of this pseudo-intellectual's "work" have been published; a new edition has recently appeared. This is yet another proof that - as Le Bon states in his work *Psychologie der Massen* (*op. cit.*, p. 51) - that there is nothing unbelievable for crowds, which are indeed stirred all the more strongly by pages filled with fabulous and legendary events, because they are capable neither of reflection nor of logical thought.

[*] *Published in French as La Psychologie des foules.

Certainly this law of mass psychology cannot be applied to just any gathering of individuals of whatever kind. A "psychological crowd" —as Le Bon calls it— is present only when, under certain circumstances, the feelings and thoughts of each individual are oriented in the same direction (*op. cit.*, pp. 10-11). A large number of people in this crowd must, in other words, be united by attending in the same direction.[275] [5QLRT]

Precisely these preconditions exist where multitudes of people who, influenced by external circumstances, have more or less developed a common mentality, due to their imprisonment in a camp under similar conditions. Each one of us who was in a prisoner of war camp knows how easily and how quickly certain rumours —called "latrine gossip" by the common soldier— found circulation in the camp, and that the more improbable they were, the more readily they were believed. Something similar undoubtedly happened in the concentration camps. It makes no difference whether the causative factor of the spread of camp legends is words or utterances made by the guards, actual observations, foreign broadcasts, or other factors. That reports from foreign radio stations were circulated among concentration camp inmates —indeed, that some prisoners were able to listen to them themselves— has, by the way, been established many times.

Naturally, mutual influence within the "psychological crowd" is especially effective when what is heard or otherwise perceived with the senses corresponds to certain notions that are already general. Thus we [112] know today that not only was the story about the killing of Jews in gas chambers deliberately channeled into the camps,[276] but that the foundations for it had already been laid before the mass of Jews was even sent to the concentration camps. A few typical examples of this may be presented here.

In the year 1936 (!), the well-known Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann stated the following: "It is no exaggeration to say that in this part of the world six million are condemned to be imprisoned in places where they are deemed undesirable, and that for them the world is divided into countries where they might not live, and countries to which they are not admitted."[277]

Weizmann was referring to the Third Reich, and he indicated that only rarely was another country prepared to support the emigration of the Jews that was being promoted by the Reich Government. But how did he arrive at the —one can almost say magical— number of six million Jews at a time when not more than 500,000 Jews lived inside the boundaries of Germany?

In that same year, 1936, the Jew Lion Feuchtwanger wrote —contrary to all truth— in his book *Die gelbe Fleck*, which appeared in Paris, that 500,000 German Jews were "threatened with extermination" although at that time —leaving aside the excesses of individual fanatics— nobody had harmed a hair of a Jew's head. The relatively small number of Jews who were in the concentration camps were there for political or criminal reasons. Not one single Jew was put into a concentration camp before the war on account of his race. This policy was changed after 1941 —long after the war had begun— because all Jews, according to Chaim Weizmann's declaration of war against the Reich in

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[275] See also *Brockhaus-Enzyklopädie*, vol. 12 (1971), p. 228, under "Masse."

[276] Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 110f.

[277] Berendsohn in his forward to Thomas Mann's *Siehen Manifeste zur jüdischen Frage* [Seven Manifestoes on the Jewish Question], p. 18.

the name of Jewry in September 1939, had to be considered potential enemies of Germany. The Americans proceeded no differently, after their entry into the war, with the Japanese living in the U.S.A., including those who were American citizens. It is astonishing that all Jews living within the border of Germany at the beginning of the war in 1939 were not arrested and put into concentration camps. No rules of international law would have stood in the way of this.

Soon after the beginning of the war, enemy propaganda circulated throughout the world, in addition to other atrocity reports, the charge that the "Nazis" were doing their utmost to kill Jews by means of poison gas. Thus a certain Thomas Mann, whom some people still venerate as a "great German man of letters" spread the fairy tale that 16,000 French Jews were gassed on a railroad train "on an open stretch of track" after the train had been "hermetically sealed." Thomas Mann added that this was by no means an isolated case"; there existed a "precise and authentic report... about the murder of not less than 11,000 Polish Jews with poisonous gas" which took place in Konin in the district of Warsaw. They were likewise "put into air-tight railway carriages" and [113] within a quarter of an hour "transformed into corpses." The "man of let ters" did not tell his listeners how one accomplished the feat of sealing the trains "hermetically" or, as the case may be, making them "air-tight." From these hermetically sealed railway carriages to the stationary "gas chambers" in concentration camps was only a short step.[278]

In view of these claims about the planned extermination of Jews in the German sphere of influence, which started to be made before the war and after the beginning of the war became more concrete and detailed, one can hardly resist the impression that the alleged extermination of six million Jews was a propaganda swindle that had been prepared long beforehand for the furtherance of certain aims of world Jewry. In any case, it is not surprising that the rabblerousing spirit of the time caused, or at least, encouraged, people to submit reports of experiences along the same lines after the war, especially since they stood to obtain advantages thereby and, what is more, make themselves appear interesting. There can be no doubt that notions influenced by mass suggestion were thus further intensified.

It is easy to find examples substantiating the view that many accounts of the alleged mass gassings in Birkenau have their origin in mass hallucinations or mass suggestion inspired by propaganda, for the observations upon which such reports are based can usually be explained in a completely natural way.[279][] Thus Butz traces the numerous reports of the odor of corpses and cremations that allegedly covered the Auschwitz region, which is described as an almost unbearable stench, back to fumes from the synthetic-rubber industry which had been established there.[280][] Anybody who has ever been in the

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[278] All citations are from the radio speech of Thomas Mann on Sept. 27, 1942; see Mann, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[279] Le Bon cites an instructive example of how observations, correct in themselves, give rise to phenomena of mass suggestion. He reports that during the siege of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War, the crowds, seeing a candle burning in an upper story window, would take it as a signal intended for the besiegers. Le Bon remarks that only two seconds thought would have established that it would be impossible for a small candle-fight to be seen so many miles away. In the imagination of the crowd, however, the simplest incident can be distorted (*op. cit.*, p. 26, footnote 1).

[280] *Op. cit.*, pp. 118ff. That the story of the terrible odour had already been connected with the supposed extermination of Jews, by Rudolf Höss during the Nuremberg Trial, undoubtedly

vicinity of a chemical plant will attest that the exhaust from it produces a stench that is often hard to bear. At the very least, the possibility that the imaginations of inmates influenced by mass suggestion, in conjunction with these circumstances, contributed to the prisoners' generally held belief in mass exterminations cannot be excluded.

Further, the charge that inmates separated from the rest as unfit for labour were killed in gas chambers evolved from the observation that these people were transported away "in the direction of the Birkenau crematoria" when it was combined with the rumours spread throughout the world by Thomas Mann and others.[281] For the "gas chambers" were said to be located in these crematoria. Moreover, the Birkenau camp was the camp in the Auschwitz region in which invalids and those otherwise incapable of labour were assembled. According to all the extant ground plans of the camp, not only were the hospital for inmates and the clothing storage area (Canada) located in the vicinity of the crematoria there, but so, too, was a steambath or possibly a bathhouse.[282] Could anything be more logical than the assumption that prisoners consigned to Birkenau as unfit for labour were taken there immediately upon their admission to the camp?

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An equally natural explanation can be given for the observation, variously reported, that corpses were removed from the cellar of one of the crematoria, or a room next to the crematorium, to the incineration area of the crematorium. It is well-known that the death-rate in the Auschwitz camps was high at times —especially during the frequent typhus epidemics.[283][] It is understandable that all these dead people could not be cremated at once. They must therefore have been stored in a special area until they could be cremated. This was the "corpse cellar" of the crematorium, mentioned in various documents, or an annex serving the same purpose. The removal of corpses from such an area was a completely natural procedure. But many an inmate who observed such a procedure may, under the mass suggestive influence of rumours that were in circulation, have come in all good faith to the conclusion that he was witness to a "gassing."

Examples of this kind could be multiplied, but let it rest at that. In his previously mentioned work, Le Bon also made it clear that even persons with scholarly training cannot escape mass suggestive influences once they have

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indicates that this "document" stems from the Allies. First of all, bodies were not constantly burning outside; and secondly, Höss must have known that the fumes produced by the chemical industry were not the most fragrant. If he had composed his report of his own free will, he would have at least put this in a different way.

[281] The SPD Chairman and former Chancellor, Willy Brandt, is also supposed to have written a gruesome report prior to 1942, while a correspondent of the New York Overseas News Agency in Stockholm. This was reported by the *Gießener Anzeiger* of August 14, 1972 on the basis of a DPA (Deutsche Presse Agentur) report from New York, published on page 99 of Heinz Roth's...*der makaberste Betrug*.

[282] See Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 929ff., and Smolen, *op. cit.*, inside back cover. In the camp plan of the WRB Reports (No. 1, p. 22) a shower room is shown between crematoria II and III.

[283] See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 125ff. Butz also supplies official figures for the death-rates of 1942-43. He explains the fact that crematoria were installed at Birkenau with reference to the very high death rate at a camp for the sick and those incapable of working. Building adequate crematoria for so large a concentration of people, taking into account the constantly occurring epidemics, was an entirely natural and understandable measure.

become part of a "psychological crowd." As members of a psychological crowd, even scholars take on its lability and credulity in regard to matters which lie outside their specialties (*op. cit.*, p.29). It is therefore a venture in futility when Poliakov/Wulf, in their book *Das dritte Reich und die Juden*, try to give particular weight to their selection of witness statements by assuring us that they selected scholars as witnesses because, with them, "observation and intellectual curiosity temper and rein in the feelings" (*op. cit.*, p. 4).[284] Likewise, it matters not whether a large or a small number of witnesses unanimously attest to an occurence. In the nature of things, the unanimity of many groups of witnesses is itself the result of mass suggestion. That is the case particularly when certain testimonies are obviously not based on direct observation, but are conclusions drawn from ambiguous facts and circumstances, as can be seen from the examples given above.

Not only the phenomenon of mass suggestion, but also every conceivable motivation for reports and testimony about gas chambers and gassings was extraordinarily intensified at the time when they were taken, due to the prevailing circumstances. A rabblerousing —but perhaps also systematically directed— world press, Jewish organizations, associations of former inmates, and last, but not least, the prosecutors and investigative agencies of the Allied victors made every effort to unearth as many negative descriptions as possible of happenings in the concentration camps —especially regarding the alleged gass ings of Jews in the concentration camps— while suppressing reports to the contrary with every means at their disposal. In this respect, Butz rightly speaks of a "hysterical emotional atmosphere" which can hardly be imagined today. Thus, for example, former concentration camp inmates who were not prepared to give incriminating evidence, or even [115] offerred to testify as witnesses for the defence, were threatened with cancellation or denial of compensation payments for their time of imprisonment, reduction of food rations, and similar measures.[285][] In a certain sense this downright hysterical attitude towards testimony not in accord with the desired picture persists even today, as I could

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[284] A good example of the effect of mass suggestion is another witness from Birkenau, Marc Klein, a former professor of biology at the University of Strasbourg, cited by Poliakov/Wulf. He was only in the main camp at Auschwitz, and informed himself from rumours and tales which he heard from a prisoner. He himself describes this prisoner, who was a Kapo to whom he gave medical treatment, as "not entirely of sound mind" (*op. cit.*, pp. 253ff).

Another Birkenau witness, Robert Levy, seems also to have been only a witness to hearsay. He gabbles about "six crematoria" which "burned day and night." In his descriptions of verifiable details, however, he is noticeably cautious. Levy is supposed to have been an assistant at Surgical Clinic B of the medical faculty of the University of Strasbourg before his deportation to Auschwitz (*op. cit.*, pp. 264-266).

Klein and Levy are the only witnesses quoted by Poliakov/Wulf on the "extermination camp" Birkenau, if one disregards the statement of Höss, which is also published in their book. The Höss memoir today is generally regarded as the most important source for the supposed mass gassings at Birkenau. Höss is supposed to have written it voluntarily in 1946-47 while in the Cracow prison. It had not yet been published when their book appeared in 1955 —a very peculiar circumstance, with which we shall deal at a later point.

[285] The following notice was published in the *Hannover Abendpost*, Nr. 34, of June 5, 1947 (cited by Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 85): "The support centre for former KZ-inmates in Rheydt has announced that it will withdraw all services from witnesses scheduled in the Buchenwald Trial who testify on behalf of the SS guards in any way." This was by no means an isolated incident, as one can gather from the testimony of the former translator for the occupation forces, Jost Walter Schneider (see note 4 above).

plainly perceive in the disciplinary proceeding against me on account of my report on Auschwitz.

All of this is, of course, all too comprehensible. In the murderous conflict that was the Second World War, the Allies themselves commit ted war crimes that were monstrous, indeed, unique in world history. In fact, they continued their crimes against humanity in violation of international law, chief among them the expulsion of millions of German people from their ancestral homelands, even as they were presuming, at Nuremberg, to pass final judgement on German "war criminals" in judicial pseudo-trials. What could have been more convenient than burdening the Germans with the great onus of genocide in the concentration camps in order to divert attention from their own abominable deeds and, at the same time, to establish the foundations of a sustained punishment of the whole German people through permanent political suppression, plundering, and exaction of financial tribute?

Now to return to the possible motivations for testimony as to mass gassings in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Whether, or to what extent, these testimonies were determined by such motivations can, it is obvious, be clearly established in only a few cases. Likewise, it is clear that the explanations given above do not rule out the possibility that the alleged state of affairs existed, in particular, do not rule out the possibility that certain specific pieces of testimony may come close to the truth. On the other hand, it must be stated just as clearly that not one of these testimonies can be accepted prima facie as true, in view of the influences and effects adverted to previously. Under the circumstances much more consideration must be given to the fact that even testimony and reports made fundamentally with the desire to relate the truth may, for various reasons, give a false representation of reality. The objective assessment of such accounts demands the application of strict criteria. Especially in the case of the question of the systematic extermination of the Jews, which —as we have seen— cannot be resolved with contemporaneous documents, reports to the effect that it happened must, to be credible, meet at least a few unalterable minimal requirements. As every jurist knows, firsthand proof is, in any case, the most unreliable mode of proof that one can imagine.

As evidence for the alleged gassing of the Jews, reports that do not contain specific details about it, but are limited to quite vague allegations of this type —as is usually the case —must be rejected at once. Such general statements are just as worthless as hearsay testimony, since they cannot be proved. Further, only statements free of contradictions, [116] which do not stand in contradiction to other circumstances and facts, may lay claim to credibility. Finally, to have probative value a statement must contain nothing improbable, something that may seem obvious to most people, but —as we shall see— is not always the case with reports about the Birkenau crematoria.

Having made these introductory remarks, we shall now consider in detail the reports on the alleged extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

"Eyewitness Accounts" of Auschwitz

Early Post-War Writings

If it was stated in the first chapter that the idea of Auschwitz was still unknown to the German public until well into the 1950's (see page 7 above), this does not mean that claims had not by then been made regarding the existence of gas chambers for the mass extermination of Jewish people at Auschwitz, such as were made in regard to the rest of the concentration camps.[286] It is just that Auschwitz did not, as it does today, occupy the focal point of the gas chamber stories. During those years, details were generally avoided when reference was made to the concentration camps in the Auschwitz region. In nearly all the other former German concentration camps, on the other hand, shuddering visitors were shown at least one room that had allegedly served as a gas chamber during the time of the Third Reich.[287] As early as 1959, the American attorney Stephen F. Pinter addressed himself to this charge, in a letter to an American newspaper. He stated:[288][

> I was in Dachau for 17 months after the war, as a U.S. War Department[EMENRT] [EMEN]Attorney, and can state that there was no gas chamber at Dachau. What was[EMENRT] [EMEN]shown to visitors and sightseers there and erroneously described as a gas cham-[EMENRT] [EMEN]ber, was a crematory. Nor was there a gas chamber in any of the other concentra-[EMENRT] [EMEN]tion camps in Germany. We were told that there was a gas chamber in Auschwitz,[EMENRT] [EMEN]but since that was in the Russian zone of occupation, we were not permitted to[EMENRT] [EMEN]investigate, since the Russians would not permit it...

The "gas chambers" exhibited in Germany proper were thus a hoax, something which is not disputed today even by historians. Nothing definite was known about those in Soviet-controlled territory, and the rumours in circulation about them could not be checked. The fact that even the doubtless well-informed American occupation official Pinter mentions that rumour had it that only *one* "gas chamber" existed in Auschwitz shows clearly that Auschwitz did not at that time play the role in anti-German propaganda it does today, namely, as the alleged centre for the extermination of the Jews.

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[286] Scheidl's statement to the contrary in volume 4 of his *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands* - also quoted by Roth: *Der makaberste Betrug*, p. 93 - cannot be correct. Rumours about gassing circulated even in the camps, as Rassinier repeatedly pointed out in his books. All the reports from that time were based not on personal experiences, but had their origin in rumours circulating through the camps. As an example let us cite a talk by a certain Hans Ballmann, given in Calw in June 3, 1945, which was printed in pamphlet form with the permission of the military government. Ballmann himself was never in Auschwitz, yet he insisted that Jews there "were brought into a closed bathroom" where instead of bath water "gas streamed from different pipes" (*op. cit.*, p. 9). We shall come across this rumour, that the so-called "gas chambers" were camouflaged as bathrooms, even more frequently. This rumour was also reported to a delegation of the International Red Cross on a visit to Auschwitz in September 1944 (*Red Cross Report*, p. 92).

[287] Thus for example, in Dachau a "gas chamber" was shown to the delegates of the International Red Cross when they inspected the camp after its occupation by the Americans (see *Red Cross Report*, p. 152). Today it is an undisputed fact that killings by gas never took place in Dachau or any other camp in the Old Reich. Regarding the gas chamber legend, see also Erich Kein, *Meineid gegen Deutschland*, pp. 233ff.

[288] Quoted in Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, p. 198; see also Heinz Roth, *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher?*, p. 111, and Huscher, *Die Flossenbürg-Lüge*, p. 12. Pinter's position is reported also to have been published in *American Mercury*, Nr. 429 (October 1959). It first appeared as a letter published in the American Catholic newspaper *Our Sunday Visitor*, June 14, 1959.

Thus there is relatively little literary testimony from the first post-war years on gassings at Auschwitz. One of the first comes from the Austrian Jewish socialist leader Benedikt Kautsky, who claimed to have been imprisoned in German concentration camps for seven years and, in particular, to have been interned from November 1942 on in the Auschwitz parent camp and in Monowitz, which he calls "Auschwitz-Buna." He remained there until the camp was evacuated in January 1945, without ever having been in danger of being gassed himself. That did not prevent him, however, from giving, in his memoir *Teufel und Verdammte* (*Devil and Damned*) which appeared in Zurich in 1946, an account of "gassings" in Birkenau, even though he was never in Birkenau. Still, he professed to have spoken with "dozens of inmates" who had "witnessed the gassings and cremations and who performed one or another function there" (*op. cit.*, p. 273). Characteristically, he did not disclose the names of these inmates. He also failed to give a convincing explanation of why he, a *Volljude*[*], was not "gassed."[289]

According to Kautsky's account, the victims were forced to undress in a special room, then "crowded into another room, which was tiled and furnished with showerheads in the ceiling." From these showerheads not water, but gas, was released, "usually carbon monoxide, so that the people suffocated in a few minutes." These unfortunates allegedly screamed and moaned during this time, went into contortions, and were "found with blue lips, with bloody mouths, noses, ears, and eyes." The gas chamber, according to Kautsky, had a capacity of up to 2,000 people. The maximum "daily output" was between 6,000 and 8,000 people (*op. cit.*, pp. 273-275).

I have selected the particulars of the alleged gassing procedure from his description which —as we shall see— completely deviates from the other descriptions, particularly from the Höss report, which today is generally considered quite reliable. Gas streaming from a showerhead would have to be heavier than air to reach the victims. Carbon monoxide (CO) gas, however, is lighter than air.[290] It does not cause death in just a few minutes nor has bleeding ever been observed in a death caused by carbon monoxide poisoning. Thus Kautsky's report proves to be a product of pure fantasy.

Additional, very early "testimony" on the gas chambers of Birkenau is contained in the previously mentioned book by Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat*.[291] There Kogon speaks of "five modern crematoria" in Birkenau and "four underground gassing bunkers with an average capacity of 1200 to 1500 people." According to his description, too, the interior of the gas chambers looked "like a bath." From the "showers" and "ventilation pillars" poured out not carbon monoxide —as Kautsky has it— but "hydrocyanic acid gas" which "slowly tore apart the lungs" of the victims (*op. cit.*, pp. 166-167).

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[*] "Full-blooded Jew ; pure Jew" – Ed.

[289] The widespread contention that Kautsky wrote in the first edition of his book, *Teufel und Verdammte*, that in no camp did he ever encounter any structure like a gas chamber during his seven-year imprisonment, is probably derived from insufficiently documented newspaper articles (thus Scheidl, in vol. 4, p. 53, of his *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*). Heinz Roth, who quotes this alleged statement by Kautsky repeatedly in his books, cites Scheidl and the report of a Swede named Einar Aberg, as well as the Hagen newspaper *Deutscher Beobachter* of June 15, 1961 (see *Was geschah nach 1942*, part I, p. 88).

[290] *Brockhaus-Enzyklopädie*, vol. 10 (1970), p. 332; as well as *Der Große Brockhaus*, vol. 6 (1955), p. 471.

[291] See pp. 110f. above and note 8 to chapter 3.

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The first edition of this book was already in print by 1946. Kogon's description, for which he cites as his source a young Jew named Janda Weiss, is just as implausible as Kautsky's. Hydrocyanic acid gas is also lighter than air, and, therefore, cannot pour down on the victims; even under pressure it would not reach them! That the gas "tore apart the lungs" of the victims, though it sounds very dramatic, is utter nonsense.[292] How one is to visualize the aforesaid "ventilation pillars" is Kogon's secret. Kogon's informant, Janda Weiss, has never stepped forward. Kogon himself was never in Auschwitz, but —like Rassinier— was a Buchenwald inmate. His book is completely worthless as a historical source, even though anti-German propaganda constantly attempts to classify it as such.

Another publication on this subject from the second half of the 1940's that should be mentioned here is Eugene Aroneanu's *Konzentrations lager — Tatsachenbericht über die an der Menschheit begangen Verbrechen* (Concentration Camp— Factual Report on the Crimes against Humanity), which is presented as a scholarly documented work. The exact year of its publication cannot be determined, but it was presented, according to its subtitle, at the Nuremberg IMT trial as "Document F 321." The "document" however,thus proves to be of scarcely any value, and the term "scholarly" can in no way be applied to this collection of fragments of reports and photographs, for which no commentary whatsoever is provided. The authors of the individual reports are mostly identified only by name, while their place of residence is not mentioned, and personal data are almost always lacking. They cannot, therefore, be identified; their names do not appear in the IMT transcript volumes, and so apparently none of them were heard personally as witnesses. Moreover, the fragments of the reports generally do not give a clue as to which concentration camps they refer.

Under these circumstances, the individual reports about gassings of Jews can be passed over here, so far as it cannot be inferred from them that Auschwitz is the subject. That is the case with only a few passages in this "documentary work."[293]

Thus it is reported, on the basis of a "source" which cannot be more precisely identified, that "test gassings" of Russian prisoners of war were allegedly carried out in the cellar of Block XI of the parent camp. There are also several reports about this in the literature of later years, which, in any case, are in disagreement as to the details.[294] If this were not merely a rumour, it could

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[292] The hydrocyanide gas allegedly used for killing Jews, according to present descriptions, is supposed to have been crystallized prussic acid, so-called cyanide, known as "Zyklon B," which had been used to exterminate pests and vermin for decades. Compare *Brockhaus-Enzyklopädie*, vol. 2 (1967), p. 799, and *Der Große Brockhaus*, vol. 2 (1953), p. 157. Zyklon B was not only used as a disinfectant in all concentration camps, but also in the Army.

[293] "See the section on "extermination" in the "documentation» (Aroneanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 90ff.). Apparently no rumour was too nonsensical to be included in this collection. Since most of these incidents cadt be pinned down specifically, the question arises as to whether these "documents" possess any probative value. Evidently the Nuremburg Tribunal, which certainly was not very finicky, did not consider a single one of these statements; they may have had a certain psychological impact upon the judges, however.

[294] For example, in Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 162; Rozanski, *op. cit.*, pp. 42f. See further Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 25 and 31. On the other hand, Smolen reported that the "experimental gassing" was supposed to have been conducted in the basement Block II (*op. cit.*, pp.

possibly refer to the execution of Soviet commissars on the basis of the so-called Commissar Order. It is a known fact that such executions were, in many cases, undertaken in concentration camps.[295] Whether gas was really used is a question that may be left aside, since this was an isolated occurence which has nothing to do with the subject of our investigation.
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Aroneanu presents an excerpt on the Birkenau gas chamber proper, which appeared in the WRB-Report, mentioned in the preceding chapter. It is astounding that he does not quote the detailed report by Vrba and Wetzler in the first part of the WRB-Report. Instead he repeats the account attributed to the Polish Major, whose identity remains unknown to this day, which is contained in the second part of the WRB-Report. From this it may be assumed that Aroneanu's "documentary work" appeared immediately after the end of the war, when it had not yet been decided which of the two contradictory versions would be favoured. I shall return to the contents of these two accounts from the WRB-Report in another place.

Aroneanu's collection of reports seems to have been the original source of the later and often-modified story of a woman who allegedly snatched a pistol from an SS officer, in front of the gas chamber at Birkenau, and shot him to death. In this case, it was an "Israelite of extraordinary beauty" from Belgium, whose child had been "smashed against a concrete wall" by that SS officer. Kogon, on the other hand, tells this story as that of an Italian dancer who, on orders of the SS, had to "dance naked in front of the crematorium" before her gassing (*op. cit.*, p. 167). Kogon even knows the name of the SS officer who was shot to death because he was so careless about his pistol: It was "Rapportführer Schillinger." Karl Barthel also repeats this tale, in his book *Die Welt onhe Erbarmen* (The World Without Pity) According to him, however, the heroine was a "French actress" for whose "courage" Barthel has words of praise (*op. cit.*, p. 129). Barthel himself was only in Buchenwald, but he probably found it necessary to make his own account a little more interesting with this and other such gossip. Other authors vary the tale of this "martyr" even further. She is an unusually instructive example of the imaginings of former concentration camp inmates.

I do not wish to deprive readers of another tale from Aroneanu's purportedly scholarly piece of trash, since it contains a more detailed description of the procedure for "exterminating Jews" at Auschwitz. The source cited for it is a "report from the Russian authorities" which is remarkably exact. It states (*op. cit.,* p. 102):

> 800 or 900 meters from the spot where the ovens are located, the prisoners climb into small wagons that run on rails. In Auschwitz, they are of different sizes, with a capacity of 10-15 people. As soon as it is loaded, the wagon is set in motion at full speed down the sloping corridor. At the end of the corridor is a wall: Behind it is the entrance to the oven. When the wagon strikes the wall, the wagon tilts over, and hurls its load of living human beings into the oven. It is followed by another wagon with another group, and so on.

15f.). However, in another place, he too speaks about Block XI in connection with this (*op. cit.*, p. 67).

Naturally this event would also be mentioned in the alleged memoirs of Rudolf Höss; see *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 122 and 155.

[295] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 196, 268f., 272f. This incident is connected with the commissar order in Höss's alleged memoirs: See *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 122 and 155.

That was a most practical arrangement for mass extermination, except that it brings to grief that favourite invention of Jewish-Bolshevist [120] atrocity propaganda —the "gas chambers." Kautsky explains, by the way, that the varied allegations about people being burned alive in cremation ovens are completely unfounded, because the openings to these ovens were so narrow that just one or two corpses could be shoved into them at a time. To shove a living human being into the oven would have required either that he be bound or that the strength of several people be employed; besides, it would have attracted far too much attention (*op. cit.*, p. 276). Moreover, this method would only make the figures circulated on the number of persons exterminated at Auschwitz seem even more implausible than they already do. One of Aroneanu's "informants" Feigelsohn Raphael, claimed that "in Auschwitz alone seven million people were put to death" (*op. cit.*, p. 110).

This estimate was undercut only a little by Irene Gaucher, who, in her booklet *Todeslager* (Death Camp) published in 1948, reported that from four to six million died in Auschwitz. As is quite characteristic for the first post-war reports on the camp, she relates in very general terms that the "number of executions" in Birkenau ran from 10,000 to 12,000 persons *per diem* and that "death in the gas chamber" (only one?) was on the daily agenda; children were even "thrown into the ovens alive." Incidentally, the number of deaths alleged by Irene Gaucher stands in gross disparity to her statement that there were only six(!) ovens in the five crematoria of Auschwitz (including the old crematorium) (*op. cit.,* p. 48).

In 1948, a certain Zenon Rozanski published his Reportage aus der Strafkompanie des KL Auschwitz (Report from the Auschwitz Penal Company).[296] This narrative, which contains a good deal of dialogue, can almost be called exciting. The fact that Gerhard Grande, the business manager of the Executive Board of the Union of Former Political Prisoners in Hannover, wrote the foreword perhaps underscores the importance attributed to this publication. He affirms, as a former Auschwitz inmate, that the author's description is correct in every respect. One might therefore assume that more complete information about the alleged gas chambers and crematoria of Birkenau would be be supplied in this publication, particularly since the penal company was housed in one of the barracks of Section Ib, which was located in the immediate vicinity of crematorium II.[297]

Rozanski, however, obviously knew nothing about the alleged gas chambers and crematoria. He mentions only that the camp physician Entress[298] determined the method of execution for prisoners sentenced to death, either by "injection" or in the "gas chamber" (*op. cit.*, p. 35). For one who —at least for a

[296] Rozanski is supposed to have been a Polish officer. Reitlinger refers to his report several times. His contradictions are readily apparent in Reitlinger's book. He writes on page 117 that Rozanski described Auschwitz at a time when there was only one camp without a gas chamber." On the same page he mentions, however, that the Rozanski report in the so-called "extermination camp" Birkenau ends in July 1942, at a time when Jews were supposedly being gassed continuously. On page 351 Reitlinger writes, drawing on Rozanski's report, that disabled prisoners "were selected for the gas chambers" by 1942.

[297] See the camp plan in Smolen (inside back cover).

[298] SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Ferdinand Entress was chief physician in Auschwitz. He was sentenced to death in Cracow on November 22, 1947. Compare Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 581. According to another version, Entress was sentenced to death by an American military court in May 1946, and hanged. (Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 416).

while— allegedly lived in the immediate vicinity of the "death factories" he is very reticent. The only conclusion that can really be drawn is either that these "death factories" did not exist, or that Rozanski himself was never in Auschwitz-Birkenau. At any rate, this publication seems to indicate that as late as 1948 uncertainty [121] prevailed about the gas chambers of Birkenau, even in the case of those inmates who claimed to have lived close to them. Rozanski reports in somewhat greater detail on the alleged gassing of Russians in the "bunker" of the parent camp, mentioned above, although he says that he was present only when the "bunker" was opened and the corpses were removed (*op. cit.*, pp. 42-43). However, it is possible that he was only reporting what he knew by hearsay.[299]

The same uncertainty in regard to the Birkenau gassing legend is detectable in the personal narrative of Ella Lingens-Reiner, who was an inmate physician in the Birkenau women's camp. Her account is available only in English. Entitled *Prisoners of Fear*, it was published in 1948 as well, by a London publishing house. Lingens-Reiner admits that at first she heard of gassings only by way of rumour. But she claims finally to have observed it personally. One night, she says, when she could not sleep because of the heat and the flies, open trucks loaded with women and children drove past, again and again, in the direction of the crematoria. Scarely 15 minutes later, she claims, she saw thick smoke ascending from the chimneys of the crematoria and smelled the sweetish odor of burning corpses. A flame six feet high —*i.e.,* about two metres— ascended from the crematorium chimney and the odor of burnt fat and hair supposedly became unbearable. It was then, she claims, that she "knew" that it was true that mass murder was being committed (*op. cit.*, pp. 69-70).

In another passage, she reports a "gassing" that allegedly occured in "barrack (hut) 25" into which, though it had room for only 500 persons, 2,000 were crammed, and then "gassed." A girl from the camp fire brigade supposedly told her this story (*op. cit.*, pp. 84-85).

This, then, is what Ella Lingens-Reiner "knows." Here one must also bear in mind that the infirmary was located in close proximity to the crematoria, where the gas chambers are supposed to have been. What is particularly striking about her description of her nocturnal observations is that the crematoria went into operation just 15 minutes after the trucks with the women and children had driven past. The "gassing" including all the necessary preparations for it, must have been accomplished at lightning speed. The flames shooting out of the crematorium chimney are just as improbable as the alleged smell of burning fat and hair. Such a crematorium is nothing but a fantasy! If Ella Lingens-Reiner was not consciously lying, she was, in all probability, the victim of mass suggestion. The fact that she relates the story about the 2,000 women gassed in barrack 25 as though she had firsthand knowledge of it also supports this interpretation. According to Smolen's account, by the way, barrack 25 was where weak, exhausted, or sick female inmates were assembled. It was thus a kind of sickbay, not a gassing room. Anyway, why would one make use of such a primitive gassing facility when there 122 were allegedly perfect "gas chambers" in the four crematoria?

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[299] See also p. 118 and note 28 above. The cells in the cellar of Block XI were called "Bunker" by the inmates.

We are now at the end of our survey of the most important publications from the immediate post-war years in which Auschwitz is treated, more or less in detail, as an "extermination camp." As we have seen, either the authors' sources are obscure or the individual testimonies are noticeably dependent on rumour and hasty conclusions. All this only goes to show just how uncertain the information regarding Auschwitz was at the time, unless one were to conclude here and now that this camp complex simply was not a centre for the extermination of Jews. For, given the fact that hundreds of thousands of people survived Auschwitz, there should be an abundance of clear and cogent reports on it, not just these vague, contradiction-filled, and, in part, absurd accounts, the very origin of which cannot, in many cases, even be determined.

For nearly ten years after 1948, hardly anything more was heard about Auschwitz. The alleged memoirs of Miklos Nyiszli, who is supposed to have practised medicine at Birkenau in 1944, were not translated into German after their publication in France in 1951.[300] These memoirs will be discussed further elsewhere. Their authenticity is highly questionable. Before examining further the Auschwitz literature, we should take another look at the testimony on Auschwitz that was made at the trials conducted by the Allied victors after the fall of the Reich.

Allied "War Crimes" Trials

Even though we would prefer, for certain reasons, not to dwell on the Allied victors' post-war trials (cf. pp. 22f. above), we still cannot avoid coming to grips with some of the testimony in these trials, since it is cited when "Auschwitz" is the subject under discussion. This is testimony exclusively from the so-called Nuremberg Trials of 1945-49, primarily from the main trial, which was conducted by the four victorious powers against 24 leading personalities of the Third Reich and six individual organizations, the so-called IMT Trial. The other court proceedings staged against Germans by the individual victorious powers have scarcely any relevance to our subject, since they have nothing to do with the Auschwitz concentration camp or treat it only peripherally. The transcripts of those proceedings, in so far as they exist at all, are accessible only with difficulty. Their lack of importance is clear from the fact that they are almost never cited in the standard literature. The testimony on Auschwitz that emerged in these subsidiary trials was delivered in such general terms that it cannot be used as a historical source material. This all the more so as it served as a legal tactic rather more than it served truth, as Butz has made clear with the example of the testimony of the former SS-Hauptsturmführer Josef Kramer in the Bergen-Belsen trial.[301]

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[300] Nyiszli is supposed to have been in Auschwitz as a prison doctor (pathologist) from May 1944 to January 18, 1945, where he supposedly dissected bodies for Dr. Mengele. Allegedly he had already published an account of his experiences in Rumania and Hungary, although no particulars on this are available. See Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 395f.

[301] Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 175f. and 264ff. Kramer first made a detailed statement in which he described gas chambers and mass extermination in Auschwitz as a he. In an additional statement, probably not made voluntarily, he "confessed" that while he was camp commander, there was a single gas chamber connected with the single crematorium in Birkenau. In any case he claimed he was not in charge of the facility due to a special order of Commander Höss, although the buildings were in the camp Kramer commanded. Since Kramer, by his own account, was camp commander of Birkenau from May to November 1944, his story contradicts the legend, according to which there were four crematoria with gas chambers in Birkenau. The investigators in the Belsen Trial had

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To be sure, a special trial of Auschwitz administrative personnel and guards was held in Poland, against most of whom the death penalty or long prisoner sentences were pronounced.[302] The transcript of those proceedings has, to the best of my knowledge, never been made available in German translation. The transcript reposes in some Warsaw archive, and to date —so far as I know— only a few, not especially important, fragments of testimony have been made public, which again proves how little value in general is attributed to them.[303] However, it is not necessary to belabour such facts here, for no serious historian would consider using as a historical source testimony coming from a show trial staged under Communist direction. Since this, unfortunately, cannot be considered as obvious in the case of certain testimony from the Nuremberg Trials, we are compelled to devote somewhat closer attention to the latter.

It will prove useful to acquaint ourselves with the most important of these trials, the IMT trial against the so-called "Major War Criminals" using the 42-volume transcript of the proceedings. Upon inspection of these volumes, we must conclude, to our surprise, that the International Military Tribunal, or, as the case may be, the prosecuting officials of the four victorious powers, did not even bother to locate the most important eyewitnesses to the alleged extermination camp at Auschwitz. Here we mean the two authors of the first of the accounts of Birkenau in the so-called WRB Report, which, with its depiction of the gas chambers and crematoria of Birkenau, originally laid the foundations for the claim that Jews were exterminated at Auschwitz-Birkenau, a role which —as we shall see— was later taken over by the alleged memoirs of Rudolf Höss, the former commandant of Auschwitz. The WRB Report itself was not even accepted in evidence and entered into the trial record, but only some highly questionable mortality statistics in it (see p. 124 above and note 172 to Chapter Two). Presumably the reason for this is to be found in the fact that the report not only contain internal contradictions, but also contradicts to a certain degree a "document" which the Soviets introduced into the proceedings, the "Report of the Soviet War Crimes Commission" (Document 008-USSR), to which I shall return below.

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proceeded too rashly here. They had clearly neglected to master the details of the desired legend — for instance, the WRB report. They also found it unnecessary to wait for the results of the Nuremberg Trials, which were supposed to provide the proof for the "Nazi crimes" until then known only through propaganda. The Belsen trial began before a British military court before the big IMT Trial was just beginning. Kramer was hanged in December 1945, and became one of the first victims of vengeful justice by the victors.

Kramer, at the end the commander of Bergen-Belsen, could have easily avoided the victors' justice; it speaks for his good conscience that he surrendered his camp, although he had the chance to flee, as did part of the guard detachment (see the report of the former captain, Nadolski, in *Nation Europa*, Nr. 5/1968).

[302] This trial took place from November 24 to December 22, 1947 before the Supreme People's Court in Cracow (Rawicz in *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, p. 215, footnote 30), after Rudolf Höss had already been sentenced to death earlier and hanged in April 1947 at Auschwitz camp (see Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 584).

[303] One should consult, for example, the footnotes of Rawicz on Professor Kremer's diary (*op. cit.*, pp. 215ff.). In *Faschismus-Ghetto-Massenmord* are quoted excerpts from the statement of Rudolf Höss before the Supreme People's Court of Poland (*Akten des Höß-Prozesses*, vol. XXI, pp. 3f., 160ff.) which concur word for word with entries attributed to Höss. The concurrence is unusual because one normally does not recite his own writings by rote. Compare *Faschismus-Ghetto-Massenmord*, pp. 374ff. on the one hand, and *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 153ff. and 162f., on the other.

At no other time, either, was any effort made to secure important eyewitnesses, and that seems quite understandable when one considers how contradictory and, in part, completely implausible the reports on Auschwitz of that time were. In view of this state of affairs, it was presumably decided to establish not so much the details of the alleged mass extermination in Auschwitz as the fact of it itself. Anyway, there were enough uniformly coached aligned "witnesses" to the alleged "gas chambers" in Germany proper, and the corresponding "gas chambers" could be built, as was not the case with Auschwitz, so that populace, politicians, and journalists would receive the proper visual lessons in the "findings" of the trials. No doubt it was believed that the "extermination [124] facilities" of Auschwitz would, under these circumstances, require no further explanation: The same thing must have existed at Auschwitz as existed everywhere else —only on a bigger scale! Even then, this had already been decided.[304]

A major factor in the Tribunal's striking reluctance to examine the facts of the case in regard to Auschwitz was probably the unqualified testimony of two female witnesses at the very beginning of the hearing. These former female Birkenau inmates made mention of details which were partly incredible and partly did not fit the framework of the legend, as set forth in the main section of the WRB Report. That was of little service to the aim of the trial.

The first of these witnesses to appear was Claude Vaillant-Couturier, who was called by the French prosecution, and was, at that time, a member of the French parliament.[305] She moved "the" Birkenau gas chamber —so, there was just one!— to Block 25, which according to Smolen's ground-plan of the camp was in the women's camp (Section B Ia) at Birkenau, thus far removed from the crematoria, which according to the legend it adjoined.[306] Smolen also designates this block as a "death block" but in the sense that incurably ill inmates who had been singled out for "gassing" were allegedly assembled there before they were driven off to the gas chambers in trucks.[307] Evidently this barrack was a kind of sickbay, such as existed at that time in every German Labour Front camp, for instance.

In another part of her testimony, the witness stated:[308]

> When, in 1944, we were working in the seamstresses' block, our block, the block in which we lived, was located across from the railway station. The entire procedure had been improved; instead of making the selections at the station, a side-track spur line brought the train almost to the gas chamber. The train stopped about 100 meters from the gas chamber. That was exactly in front of our block, but naturally, was separated from it by a double row of barbed wire.

This still says nothing about the location of the "gas chamber." However, the "gas chamber" mentioned by this witness obviously was not located in one

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[304] The obvious conclusion that springs to mind, after all the gas chamber stories told about the concentration camps located in the Reich proved to be untrue, is, rather incongruously, neglected. On the Dachau gas chamber hoax, compare Erich Kern's treatment in *Meineid gegen Deutschland* (*op. cit.*, pp. 233ff.). According to a witness quoted by Kern, the Americans built four new crematoria, none of them usable, in order to exaggerate the lies about this concentration camp even further (*op. cit.*, pp. 260ff.).

[305] IMT VI, 228ff.

[306] IMT VI, 234.

[307] Smolen, *op. cit.*, p. 92. Smolen probably took his allegations from the Kitty Hart report.

[308] IMT VI, 240.

of the crematoria, as is otherwise always claimed. For after describing the procedure following the arrival of a trainload of Jews, the witness continued:[309]

> Those who were selected for the gas chambers [Now there are more than one!], that is, the old people, children, and mothers, were taken into a red brick building on which was written "bath." There they were told to undress and each given a towel before they were taken to the supposed shower room... After the people were undressed, they were taken into a room that appeared to be a shower room, and through a hole in the ceiling the capsules were dropped into the room. An SS man observed its effects through a peep-hole. After approximately five to seven minutes, when the gas had done its work, he gave a signal for the doors to be opened. Men with gas masks, who were also inmates, came in and carried out [125] the corpses. They told us that the prisoners must have suffered before their death, since they were clinging to each other so tightly that it was difficult to separate them...

Thus a "red brick building" contained the "gas chambers" —let each reader decide for himself how many there were. Neither the court nor the prosecution asked any questions about this, and must have listened to the rest of the testimony of this witness with mixed feelings. No doubt unintentionally, her account gives one the impression that the gas chamber must have been quite small, since she speaks of a "room" and also of only *one* "hole in the ceiling" through which the "gas capsules" were dropped. None of this fits in with the usual descriptions or with the allegations that millions of people were gassed, which have been made about Auschwitz ever since the publication of the WRB Report.

The witness also did not commit herself in regard to the number of crematoria, and the prosecutor Dubost, as well as the court, avoided pressing for more clarity by asking the appropriate questions. She only remarked, in very general terms, that Auschwitz had "eight cremation ovens" which, however, were "not sufficient after 1944." Thereafter the corpses were burnt in large pits, which had been ignited with "brushwood doused with gasoline."[310]

In any case, the witness gave some thought to the amount of gasoline necessary for the burning of corpses, a matter about which, to this day, hardly a word has been said. The witness was not lacking in imagination, since she paid no attention to the fact that in 1944 the Reich could hardly afford to squander gasoline by using it to burn corpses. At last the boundless loquacity of this witness, which doubtless no one expected, soared to dramatic heights:[311]

> About 45 minutes to one hour after the arrival of a transport, we could see from our block the high flames from the cremation ovens and incineration pits lighting up the sky. One night we were awakened by frightful screaming. The next day we were told by some of the men on duty with the *Sonderkommando* that on the previous evening the *Gaskommando* had thrown children alive on to the funeral pyre, since they no longer had sufficient gas.

This was —as anyone can perceive— an atrocity story pure and simple. It would have been interesting to learn more from this witness about the appearance of the "cremation ovens" from which "high flames" soared upwards. Nor is it easy to understand what the "incineration pits" had to do with the cremation ovens. Apparently nobody at that time demanded such precise information, nor was the witness asked for it.

It would seem superfluous to consider this testimony in further detail, since it was obviously concocted from a wide variety of rumours. At the end of his cross-examination, the defence attorney, Dr. Marx, asked this witness what profession she had practised before the war, to which she replied that she had

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[309] IMT VI, 241.
[310] IMT VI, 242.
[311] IMT VI, 242.

been a journalist.[312] This answer might explain [126] everything. Fantasy, exaggeration, and mendacity are more prevalent in this profession than in any other, which is not to say that there are no responsible journalists. The witness Vaillant-Couturier was, however, not among them. She also reported "gassings" at the Ravensbrück concentration camp with the same wealth of detail, which detracts considerably from her credibility.[313]

A certain Severina Schmaglewskaya was introduced as a Birkenau witness by the Russian prosecution. She reported, among other things, on the treatment of Jewish children on their arrival in Birkenau.[314] Probably she expected to make an especially meaningful contribution to the trial when she declared:

> I worked very close to the railway tracks, which led to the crematorium. Sometimes, in the morning, I came near the German latrines, and from there I could see the transports that were arriving. There I observed that many children were among the Jews sent to the concentration camp. Sometimes there were families, to be more exact, families with several children... Women who carried children in their arms or pushed them in prams, and those who had grown children, were sent together with these children to the crematorium. The children were separated from their parents in front of the crematorium, and taken separately to the gas chambers. At that time, when most of the Jews were murdered in the gas chambers, an order was issued to throw the children into the ovens of the crematorium or the pits surrounding the crematorium without first gassing them.

Even the Russian prosecutor, High Counsellor Smirnov, apparently considered this latter claim an exaggeration. However, in her reply to a question of his on this point the witness re-affirmed her statement:

> Yes, indeed! The children were thrown into the pits alive. The screams of these children could be heard throughout the entire camp. It is difficult to say how many children were put to death in this manner.

In this way, she undoubtedly made her testimony even more unbelievable and also contradicted the propaganda effort, which, up to that time, represented the gassing of the Jews as a secret operation. It makes little sense to have raised doubts about the legendary stealth of the mass murder operation against the Jews by speaking so provocatively of the children's screams. And when the witness described the incineration pits, which, according to legend, were located in a grove of birch trees, as surrounding the crematorium —that must also have seemed utterly nonsensical and at odds with the standard story.

Incidentally, when the Red Army occupied Auschwitz, it liberated a large number of "child inmates" who were —as can be seen from a Soviet documentary photograph[315] (cf. the illustrated appendix)— obviously in a better state of nourishment than could be observed among the children in the bombed-out cities of the Reich in the final years of the war. Likewise, the almost legendary Anne Frank, who was sent to Auschwitz together with her family, was not gassed there. Rather, [127] about one month afterwards, she was transferred to Bergen-Belsen.[316]

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[312] IMT VI, 255.

[313] IMT VI, 250f.

[314] On the following see IMT VIII, 350ff.

[315] This photograph comes from the magazine *Sowjetunion*, Nr. 3/1975, and was published in *Denk mit*, series 3/1975, on pages 56f.

[316] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 and 384. Anne Frank died, probably during the beginning of 1945, at Bergen-Belsen. In the final months of the war epidemics stemming from severe shortages of food and medicine, and the overcrowding of the camp with newcomers evacuated from concentration camps in the East, caused many deaths. On Bergen-Belsen see the

One can vividly imagine how embarrassing such exaggerated witness testimony, with its contradictions and absurdities, must have been to the Tribunal. Had it continued in this vein, the entire carefully constructed legend would not only have seemed questionable, but even appeared ridiculous. Thus witnesses from whom details regarding the "Auschwitz extermination camp" were to be expected were disregarded. Henceforth care was taken that only very general corroboration of the legend of the extermination of the Jews be obtained.

What seemed to matter most of all to the prosecution and the Tribunal was to obtain "evidence" that Auschwitz was designed to serve as the centre for the extermination of the Jews. Kaltenbrunner, who was head of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) during the last two years of the war, stubbornly refused to admit knowing anything about such a plan. He asserted that in essence he was responsible for only the domestic and foreign intelligence service of his office. Himmler reserved for himself all police and executive decision-making powers. He never visited the Auschwitz concentration camp himself.[317]

No less unproductive was the testimony of the onetime senior government official Rudolf Mildner, former head of the Gestapo in Kattowitz, near Auschwitz. It is of little significance that he affirmed, in a sworn statement, that he had been shown "facilities for extermination" at Auschwitz.[318]

Even a crematorium, if you will, is a facility for extermination —or, to be more precise, a facility for the cremation of corpses, without regard to their manner of death. Every city of any size in the world possesses at least one such facility. Thus, at the Auschwitz concentration camp complex, with its many camps and hundreds of thousands of inmates, such a facility was by no means unusual, especially since severe epidemics raged constantly in the Auschwitz region, continually claiming their victims among the SS as well as the camp population. Although not a word of it is to be found anywhere in Mildner's deposition, the deposition has at various times been interpreted to mean that he had see the gas chambers in operation.[[319]

On the other hand, two other former high-ranking SS men quite voluntarily confirmed the alleged planned extermination of the Jews and designated Auschwitz as the centre of this action. They were the former SS-Obersturmbannführer Wilhelm Höttl, from whom, as is generally known, the six

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Briesen court report and that of Captain Nadolski in *Nation Europa*, Nr. 5/1968; they are also cited by Heinz Roth, *Was geschah nach 1945*, part 1, pp. 57ff.

[317] IMT XI 259ff., especially 267ff. Kaltenbrunner, as wel!, explained to the American prison psychologist Gilbert in regard to the alleged mass murders in Auschwitz: 1 neither gave orders nor did 1 carry them out. You have no idea how secret these things were kept, even from me." Thus Kaltenbrunner, as well, followed the tactic of not questioning the alleged exterminations. By the way, the others accused are said to have avoided him because, already believing in the extermination of Jews as a result of their "brainwashing," they could not imagine that he, as chief of the RSHA, had not known about the crimes in the concentration camps. (Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 248ff.). This is a logical conclusion if these acts against the Jews really did take place. That Kaltenbrunner denied knowing about it was a tactical error on his part. He was sentenced to death as well, and hanged on October 16, 1946.

[318] IMT XI, 283; his aflidavit PS-2376 (IMT XXX, 290-291) is also inconclusive. SS-Standaftenführer Dr. Rudolf Mildner was released from custody as a Nuremberg witness in 1949. He was never brought to trial. See Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 588, and Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

[319] For example Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

million figure emanates,[320] and the former SS-Hauptsturmführer Dieter Wisliceny.[321] Both had been associates of SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, who at the time of the trial had vanished and to whom, then as now, a key role in the alleged extermination of the Jews was attributed. Höttl and Wisliceny maintained that what they reported they had only heard from Eichmann. Since at his trial in Jerusalem Eichmann denied absolutely their allegations, which [128] corroborated by no documents, they cannot be regarded as having probative value.[322] At the IMT trial, they were, of course, very welcome. However, part of the legal strategy of the defendants and witnesses in all trials of this kind was —as is clear today— to curry favour with the court by not contesting the basic charges, considered by the court as established, and, indeed, in many cases, to affirm them, while denying their own complicity in the offense, or, at least, representing it as the result of obedience to orders. Whenever possible, the actual responsibility was shifted to those who were —like Eichmann— untraceable or already dead. Given the hysteria of the time, this legal strategy frequently afforded the only possibility of protection; obviously, it was not always successful. For this reason, *all* testimony from these trials must be viewed from the beginning with the greatest skepticism.[323]

Nothing else can apply to the affidavit of the attorney Werner Paulmann, a former SS Justice in Kassel, which contains the allegation, made with no firsthand knowledge, that gassings were known to have occurred at Auschwitz, albeit only towards the end.[324] In this, he was following the line of his colleagues Dr. Reinicke and Dr. Morgen, whose testimony, which goes into greater detail, we shall discuss further below.

Similarly, the affidavit of the former SS-Standartenführer Kurt Becher belongs among the testimonies from pure hearsay. He reported on the abrogation by Himmler of the alleged extermination order, which, he claimed, he himself "secured" from Himmler. That this testimony was offered by Becher to save his own neck is so obvious that one can't attach any significance to it. Becher participated in the deportation of Hungarian Jews, the alleged "gassing" of whom Butz has convincingly refuted in a special chapter of his book.

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[320] See the affidavit of November 26, 1945, Document 2738-PS (IMT XXXI, 85ff.) and IMT XI, 255ff., 285ff. Höttl's statements are limited to these written statements. He did not have to appear in front of the Tribunal in person, probably because, according to his own account, he worked for the Allies during the war. Compare Härtle, *Freispruch für Deutschland*, pp. 190.

[321] Wisliceny was a witness for the prosecution in person: IMT IV, 393ff. and 412ff.

He was willing to cooperate with the Nuremberg prosecution to save himself from the Czech gallows. According to his statements, he was responsible for the deportation of Greek and Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz, but never saw the camp himself. During his imprisonment in Bratislava he is supposed to have composed another written statement dated November 18, 1946, which was published by Poäakov/Wulf (pp, 87fL). Wisliceny was sentenced to death in July 1948 at Bratislava (Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 594).

For an evaluation of Wisliceny's statements, see also Servatius, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

[322] By all accounts, in his trial Eichmann followed the tactic of not questioning the alleged mass exterminations; he merely denied his own participation. See for example Servatius, *op. cit.*, and Nellessen, *Der Prozeß von Jerusalem*. That he hardly saw anything of Auschwitz was confirmed by Hannah Arendt in her book, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 124. According to his own account, he was present at an outdoor corpse burning only one time (Nellessen, *op. cit.*, p. 237). Eichmann had nothing to say about "extermination facilities" in Auschwitz.

[323] On this also Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 174ff. Further Maser, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

[324] Doc. SS-64, IMT XLII, 543ff., 548.

It was for other reasons, however, that the former head of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (WVHA), SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl, confirmed the extermination of the Jews: Namely, as the American Senator Joseph McCarthy told the American press on May 20, 1949, Pohl did not sign the statements in which he himself was incriminated until he had been tortured for so long that he admitted his "guilt."[325] From his affidavit of July 15, 1946 it emerges that the Reich Ministry of Economics, headed by Reichsminister Funk, received textiles and jewelry from Jews killed in the concentration camps, including Auschwitz, in the years 1941-42.[326] The dating of these events proves their incredibility. Deportation of Jews to Auschwitz did not begin to any significant extent until the spring of 1942. The so-called Wannsee Conference, which laid the organizational groundwork for the deportation of Jews to the occupied Eastern territories, took place in January 1942. It is clear that at the time of the IMT trial, however, the Allies knew nothing about it. The so-called Wannsee Protocol was only presented in the later "Wilhelmstrasse" trial, by U.S. Prosecutor Kempner. Accor[129]dingly, the start of the alleged extermination of the Jews in Auschwitz is dated no earlier than spring 1942. Before then, comparatively few Jews were interned there.[327]

The defendants at the IMT trial were even shown a film of the Americans "discovering" the murdered Jews' jewelry, mentioned by Pohl, in a vault of the Reichsbank, and confiscating it. Later, in the Wilhelmstrasse trial, it was disclosed that this film was nothing but an American hoax. The Americans had made the film themselves and also put the props —gold teeth and jewelry from the alleged murdered Jews— in the Reichsbank vault for that purpose. To this very day, nobody knows from where they looted them.[328]

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[325] See Harwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 10 and 12. See also Maser, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

[326] Doc. 4045-PS, IMT XXXIV, 110.

[327] This date is derived from the Höss reports, which are today considered definitive. At first only fairly small liquidations are supposed to have been undertaken; not until summer 1942 did the transports to Auschwitz become frequent (see *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 123 and 156). See also Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 173ff.

[328] In this connection the testimony of the vice president of the German Reichsbank, Emil Puhl, which was presented by the prosecution in the IMT trial, is sometimes quoted (Doc. 3944-PS, IMT XXXIII, 570), for instance by Poliakov-Wulf in *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden* (p. 28, here cited without source). This statement was also Kempner's work. Puhl distanced himself from its main content during his interrogation, as a result of which he found himself locked up in a Nuremberg prison cell that evening. This, of course, is always passed over in silence when the document is quoted.

On all this see Springer, *Das Schwetl auf der Waage*, pp. 175. In this book, which is based on the writings of Goebbels's colleague, Hans Fritzsche, one gets an interesting survey of the trial from the point of view of the accused. Fritzsche remarks —after describing the American prosecution's film trick and its exposure— that all one could prove was that the "gold treasure" was not stored in Frankfurt. According to "believable reports," however, it was discovered in a hiding place and from there brought to the vault of the Reichsbank. He does not say who gave these "believable reports." Anyone who finds it necessary to use falsified evidence will know why.

This is not an isolated case: The lowest methods of deceit were employed by the Allied victors. We know about at least one further "documentary film" of the Americans, with which they tried to document the shooting of camp prisoners in Dachau. In reality, the film and the photos taken from it show the shooting of SS guards and German hospital patients at Dachau, fired upon by American soldiers after the occupation of the camp. See the testimony of the former German sergeant, Hans Linberger, in Erich Kern's book, *Meineid gegen Deutschland*, pp. 244-246, and *Denk mit*, series 3/1975, pp. 50-51 (with photos from the French magazine *Historia*, and the accompanying report in the April 1970 edition). Doubtless this filmstrip was also part of the camp film which was shown as "evidence" at the IMT trial and greatly impressed the accused, according

From this, too, one can see the value of Pohl's "confession" which at that time was intended to serve the purpose of incriminating Reichsminister Funk. Despite this "evidence" Funk continued to insist that he knew nothing about the accusations, and at least his fellow-defendants believed him, as Fritzsche reported.[329] Incidentally, it is significant that Pohl's affidavit was witnessed and countersigned by Robert M.W. Kempner, the former Prussian senior civil servant who was then acting as an American assistant prosecutor. Kempner was notorious for extorting testimony.[330]

Pohl's "confession" offered a further element of sham evidence for the alleged extermination of the Jews, one not to be underestimated at the time. For Pohl, as director of the WVHA, was responsible for all concentration camp administrative matters, including the construction of the crematoria and the gas chambers that allegedly adjoined them. Given all these circumstances, the testimony of this witness, as well, cannot be assigned the rank of a historical source.

By the way, the SS witnesses Dr. Reinicke and Dr. Morgen imputed a heavy burden of guilt to Pohl at the IMT trial, in obvious contradiction to the truth, presumably because they thought he was dead, and, in line with the legal strategy usual at the time, were trying to create a "scapegoat" against whom further accusations would be superfluous. Pohl, however, was still alive; he just had not been brought forth personally as a witness. The risk that he might recant his written "confession" and possibly even complain about the mistreatment inflicted on him was more than the prosecution was willing to assume. In the subsequent "Concentration Camp" Trial, Pohl was sentenced to death by the American Military Tribunal, on November 3, 1947. The fact that he was not executed until June 8, 1951 shows on what shaky ground the verdict rested.[331] He was one of the last to be handed over to the American hangman. It is possible that he had to die so that he could not tell about the sufferings he was forced to endure while in American custody.[332]

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to Gilbert (*op. cit.*, pp. 50ff.). Only the "crazy" Hess supposedly remarked to Goering: "I dont believe it."

Heinz Roth describes these and other deceitful methods of altering films in *Wieso waren wir Väter Verbrecher?* (pp. 66ff.).

[329] See previous footnote.

[330] Butz deals more thoroughly with the career and methods of the American prosecutor Kempner (*op. cit.*, pp. 160-161 and 163-169.).

[331] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 588.

[332] It is striking that none of those who must actually have known how the Jewish question was dealt with in the Third Reich survived its downfall for long. With the exceptions of Eichmann and the last commander of Auschwitz, Richard Baer, who were found later, the last ones died at the conclusion of the Allied victors' show trial. Pohl and the former commander of *Einsatzgruppe* D, SS Gruppenführer Ohlendorf, both died at the hands of the hangman on the same day at Landsberg.

Particularly noteworthy is the fate of Himmler, from whom Höss supposedly received the extermination order. Himmler turned himself in voluntarily to the English, and had already been questioned by them. He is then supposed to have been left alone in a room (!), where he committed suicide by means of a poison capsule.

This tale is more than improbable. It is hard to imagine that so prominent a prisoner, who must have been uniquely well-informed on all details of the alleged extermination of the Jews, and who in addition possessed extremely important knowledge regarding the policies of the Third Reich, would have been left unsupervised for a second. Furthermore, it is hard to understand why the results of his first interrogation have never been published. The fact that Himmler turned himself in could be a sign of his good conscience. One cannot dismiss the suspicion that he was eliminated because he could be expected to offer effective opposition to the extermination legend.

A particularly bleak chapter in the IMT trial is the cross-examination of the former SS Judges Dr. Reinicke and Dr. Morgen, who were produced as defence witnesses for the SS, which was on trial as an [130] organization, and who allowed themselves to be led into making historically untenable statements. The defence attorney for the SS, Dr. Pelckmann, played less than a glorious role in all this.

Dr. Pelckmann reproached Reinicke with the unnecessary and completely unwarranted allegation that evidence for the murder of millions of Jews "in the gas chambers at Auschwitz and elsewhere" had been presented to the Tribunal. To deny such a charge in the situation prevailing at the time would assuredly have brought the witness considerable disadvantages. Thus, as anticipated, he did not dispute the purported crime, but, obviously in accordance with the strategy of the defence, conceded that the responsibility for the murder of the Jews lay not with the SS as such, but with only a small group of specific individuals. The SS courts allegedly investigated these events as soon as they became aware of them. Thus, late in the autumn of 1944, a female Auschwitz inmate named Eleonora Hodis gave "horrifying testimony" before an SS judge, which was to have served as the "basis for proceedings against Höss and many others." In consequence of the fall of the Reich, these investigations could, of course, not be completed.[333]

The name "Eleonora Hodis" was mentioned once again by the defence attorney when he explained to the court how, strangely enough, he had encountered it in a book in the court library, entitled *SS-Dachau*. After that, the witness should have been summoned immediately. Instead, the presiding judge made every effort to exclude both book and witness from the proceedings. The particulars of Eleonora Hodis's testimony were never discussed, even though Reinicke repeatedly described her testimony as "horrifying."[334]

Reinicke himself, as became increasingly clear during his cross-examination, was totally ignorant as to details of the alleged mass exterminations of Jews at Auschwitz and elsewhere, and on this matter invoked his subordinate, SS Judge Dr. Morgen, who had "himself spoken with the agencies of the mass extermination" and had gained a "deep insight into all these things." It is noteworthy, by the way, that Reinicke, when asked at what point in time he first learned of the existence of *a* (!) gas chamber in Auschwitz, replied that it had been at the end of October or the beginning of November 1944.[335] That is the time at which, as generally claimed today, the gassing of the Jews had already been halted on orders from Himmler (see p. 20 above and n. 50 to Chapter One).

It probably would not be amiss to assume that Reinicke was a typical example of a cooperative witness whose testimony, coordinated in advance with the defence, saved his own neck and won himself a kind of halo for his "resistance." It is shocking to see how even high-ranking SS leaders thus served the purpose of the trial in the way: to prove the allegedly incomparable crimes of the Germans. In the forum of history, however, testimony of this kind can

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The case of the Auschwitz commander Richard Baer, which will be dealt with in chapter 4, is similar.

[333] IMT XX, 473ff. SS Oberführer Günter Reinecke was director of the SS Legal Department and chief judge of the Supreme SS and Police Court.

[334] IMT XX, 518ff.

[335] IMT XX, 524.

have no importance whatever, since [131] it obviously served only tactical aims and contained no verifiable details.[336]

Just as Reinicke did, the former SS Judge Dr. Konrad Morgen tried to exonerate the SS as an organization by conceding that the imagined exterminations of Jews were secret actions and by laying the blame for them with certain individuals, who could either no longer be called to account or who —like Rudolf Höss, the former commandant of Auschwitz— had already made confessions. He even made a few specific statements about the alleged Auschwitz "death factory" which, as we shall see, confused things even more, and which obviously had little basis in his own observations, as in the case of his accounts of other concentration camps, which, as he at least admitted, were mere hearsay.[337]

There are two affidavits from Morgen. In his affidavit S-65, dated July 13, 1946, he supplied information about the alleged techniques of the "extermination system" based on reports he claimed to have received from the Reichsarzt* SS, SS-Gruppenführer Grawitz.[338] In his affidavit SS-67, dated July 19, 1946, he set forth the blame for the "extermination plan" specifically naming Hitler, Himmler, Höss, and Eichmann.[339] Here, too, he cited the statements of Dr. Grawitz. Since this man was —what else?— already dead, he could neither confirm nor deny Morgen's testimony. To judge by his affidavits, Morgen also seems to have been merely a hearsay witness. That changed when he testified in person, on August 8, 1946,[340] the day after Reinicke had represented him as the best-informed witness on the mass exterminations. The content of his oral testimony before the Tribunal almost entirely matched that of his two affidavits, except that the latter were less detailed. Two basic discrepancies catch the eye, however. First, during his cross-examination Morgen made no reference whatever to his having received most of the details from Dr. Grawitz. Second, in his affidavits he did not pinpoint the exact location of the Auschwitz "extermination camp" whereas in his oral testimony he did —in a way which contradicted the legend.

The details Morgen recited about the matter of the Auschwitz "death factory" in his personal testimony are so revealing that they must here be

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[336] Reinecke was officially a "defence witness" for the SS. He was forced to become a witness for the prosecution, however, due to the strategy of the defence, which was obviously prearranged with the prosecution. Nevertheless, his testimony contains some statements in defence of the SS and the concentration camps. In any case, he cannot be compared to those "German" witnesses who volunteered their services for the prosecution, and about whom Göring is supposed to have said: "I get sick when I see how Germans sell their souls to the enemy!" (Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 115.).

[337] SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Konrad Morgen was an investigative judge for the SS during the war. Before the war, he had been a judge at the Landgericht [State Court] in Stettin. Today he practices as a lawyer in Frankfurt/Main. According to his own statement, he prosecuted about 200 cases as an SS Judge and personally arrested five camp commanders because of various crimes in the camps they were supervising; two of them were tried, sentenced to death, and shot. For reasons unclear, in his testimony Morgen cooperated in many ways with the court. He described his investigations in such a way as to seem to be related to the alleged extermination of Jews, which was without doubt not the case (see also Langbein, *Menschen in Auschwitz*, p. 273). The details he contributed, as far as the "extermination camp" Auschwitz is concerned, however, once again do not fit the picture, as we shall see.

* Medical Officer-in-Chief —T.F.

[338] IMT XLII, 551ff.

[339] IMT XLII, 563ff.

[340] IMT XX, 532ff.

quoted, at least in part, for his statements are one more vivid example that all the "knowledge" about the alleged death factories was created entirely out of thin air. Here it should be pointed out that Morgen, after Höss, is frequently represented as one of the most reliable and trustworthy witnesses on the extermination of the Jews in Auschwitz.

Morgen stated to the Tribunal that he had been in Auschwitz at the "end of 1943 or the beginning of 1944" to conduct investigations of SS [132] members. What he allegedly observed when a transport of Jews arrived, he described as follows:

> A number of trucks were parked beside the unloading dock, and the physician in question reassured the new arrivals about boarding the trucks. However, he said that only ill people, the aged, and women with children were to make use of them. Then these people crowded on the waiting transportation. Thus he had only to hold back those persons he did not wish to send to their deaths. The trucks then departed. They didn't drive to the Auschwitz concentration camp, but in another direction, to the extermination camp, Monowitz, located several kilometers away. This death camp consisted of a row of crematoria. These crematoria could not be recognized as such from the outside. They could have been taken for large bathing facilities. That is what the prisoners were told. The crematoria were surrounded with a barbed-wire fence and were guarded from inside by the previously mentioned Jewish labour detail.[341]

Although Morgen presents this all as his own observation, it is unmistakably clear that he is only repeating what he has heard from others. In any case, he could not have followed the path the trucks took. Obviously, he had not done his homework very well. Thus he describes the socalled selection after the arrival of a transport of prisoners —he calls it that, by the way, in contrast to the alleged usage of the SS: "sorting out those who were fit and unfit for work"— in a way quite different than the usual, in that he makes the prisoners select themselves, so to speak. And he designates Monowitz, not Birkenau, as the extermination camp —a definite contradiction to the legend. This was not just a slip of the tongue! For Morgen continues:

> The prisoners who marched off to the concentration camp had no indication of where the other prisoners were taken. The extermination camp Monowitz was located far from the concentration camp. It was located in an extensive industrial area. The entire horizon was dotted with smoking chimneys. The camp itself was guarded from the outside by a special troop of men from the Baltic countries —Estonians, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians. The entire technical operation was almost exclusively in the hands of prisoners assigned to it, who were only sometimes guarded by an SS-Unterführer.[342]

While Morgen quite correctly describes the Monowitz camp as located in an extensive industrial area, he insists that the "extermination camp" was located here. Later in the course of his testimony, he makes a number of references to Monowitz in this connection, whereas the name "Birkenau" does not surface a single time. To be sure, the smoking chimneys to which he refers as "dotting the horizon" may have contributed much to the rise of rumours about the mass extermination of Jews and possibly gave Morgen corresponding notions. In any case, he had no knowledge of his own about this. Of that his statements leave no doubt. In Monowitz was located, *inter alia*, the newly constructed Buna factory, which was especially important to the German war effort. It is therefore possible that this part of the camp grounds had special fencing and security, such as Morgen describes.
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[341] IMT XX, 550.
[342] IMT XX, 551.

It is peculiar that the witness Morgen was not made aware of his "mistake" by the court, especially since the former Auschwitz commandant Höss had just unmistakably described Birkenau as the site of the extermination of the Jews.[343] One didn't want to complicate matters unnecessarily and evoke further contradictions. For this reason, presumably, Morgen was not asked to testify about the number of the crematoria and gas chambers of which he had spoken. The clarification of this matter would have been of considerable importance, particularly since Höss made no statements about it. In both cases, however, that was probably just what the Tribunal intended, for it was —as already stated— obviously eager, given the doubts surrounding the extermination of the Jews, not to go too deeply into details in "confirming" that it happened. For there would have been a danger of the whole extermination legend being rendered unbelievable at the very outset.

Morgen made some additional mistakes. In answering a question from the presiding judge, he stated that at the time he was making his investigations at Auschwitz SS-Standartenführer Höss had been "commandant of the Auschwitz concentration camp and also of the Monowitz extermination camp."[344] By that time, however, Höss had long since been transferred to another post, in Berlin. His last rank in the post of command ant of Auschwitz was Obersturmbannführer.[345] Either Morgen knew nothing about the chain of command in Auschwitz at the time of his visit (from the end of December 1943 to the beginning of 1944), or in this case he followed the standard practice of the time: laying the blame only on those who were already obviously a lost cause or on those who were beyond the reach of the court. In any case, Höss had already "confessed" which fact was certainly not unknown to Morgen.[346]

Incidentally, when asked by the attorney Dr. Pelckmann, Morgen confirmed that he had interrogated, under oath, the previously men tioned Auschwitz inmate Eleonora Hodis, and that the testimony contained in the book *SS-Dachau* agreed with the transcript of his hearing.[347] Even then the tribunal did not decide to summon this important eyewitness to testify, or, at least, to have her written statement read into the record. Thus we cannot determine from the IMT volumes what the content of Hodis' testimony may have been; even Morgen was not asked for any details. However, it may be assumed with certainty that what Eleonora Hodis had testified was known to the judges.

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[343] IMT XI, 438ff., 441.

[344] IMT XX, 552.

[345] Höss was in charge of concentration camp administration as director of D I (Political Department of the Inspection of the Concentration Camps), from November 10, 1943. See *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 130 (footnote 3), and Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 584.

According to a letter from Höss's widow to the author, Höss had been unable to work due to health reasons for the six months prior to his transfer to Berlin. Consequently he could not have had anything to do with the Birkenau crematoria because the first one went into service in March 1943 at the earliest (Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 167.).

[346] Morgen was to have served as a witness for the defence of the SS. The overall tendency of his testimony, as with Reinecke, was to confirm the alleged extermination of Jews as a fact, as well as to stress again and again that the "circle of those who knew about such things... was extremely small." What he himself added to the extermination legend, however, derived most likely from his own imagination. In his affidavit SS-67 of July 19, 1946 (IMT XLII, 563ff.), he stated that the chain of command of those who were responsible for the extermination of Jews was as follows: Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, Höss, and other camp commandants. This information he supposedly obtained from the chief medical officer of the SS, Dr. Grawitz, among others (see above, p. 131).

[347] IMT XX, 560ff.

Officially, it was obviously undesirable to take notice of further details regarding the "extermination camp" and to incorporate them into the proceedings. The witnesses Vaillant-Couturier, Shmaglevskaya, and Dr. Morgen, who performed a key witness function, as it were, had already introduced enough confusion into this case. In its verdict, the tribunal did not, typically enough, make any mention of the striking contradiction —whether it was Birkenau or Monowitz— in regard to the site of the alleged extermination of the Jews.

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As a witness in the subsequent Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, Morgen tacitly corrected his earlier statements on the location of the "extermina tion facilities" which he had presumably never seen himself. Now he transferred them to Birkenau, and thereby found himself in agreement with the version that had in the meantime been inflated into a "historical fact." Nobody —not even the judges in the Auschwitz Trial— called his attention to the discrepancy with his earlier statements in the IMT trial. We shall return to this subject in Chapter Four.

In the framework of our investigation, we have now come to the most important witness in the IMT trial, the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss. When Höss is invoked today, he is usually cited only from the written memoirs he is said to have composed in the Cracow prison after his extradition to Poland. We shall delve more deeply into those later.[348] On the other hand, Höss's earlier statements in the first postwar trials are no longer mentioned, at least in regard to details and even contradicted by the Cracow memoir. Specifically, we are concerned here with the following written documents:[349]

a) The minutes of the interrogation of Rudolf Höss by the British military police (Field Security Section) on March 13-14, 1946, after his capture at a farm in the vicinity of Flensburg;[350]

b) His Nuremberg affidavit of April 5, 1946, which was considered one of the most important pieces of evidence in the IMT trial;[351]

c) Höss's testimony before the International Military Tribunal on April 15, 1946, in which he expressly acknowledged —or, better said, had to acknowledge— that his affidavit was correct;[352]

d) A handwritten memorandum, dated April 24, 1946, allegedly prepared for the Nuremberg prison psychologist Dr. Gilbert;[353]

e) Other interrogation transcripts, dated May 14 to May 22, 1946, for one of the subsequent Nuremberg trials; immediately afterwards, Höss was extradited to Poland.[354]

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[348] Höss's memoirs were not published until 1958 (by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in cooperation with Polish government officials.(!) Professor Doctor Martin Broszat dealt with this in his introduction, and provided the "document" with footnotes. A critical evaluation of the sources is lacking, however. Today Prof. Broszat has advanced to the position of director of the Institute. These "writings" are dealt with separately in pp. 196-216 of this chapter.

[349] According to Broszat, introduction, pp. 7-8 (footnote 1) to the Höss "autobiography", *Kommandant in Auschwitz*.

[350] Doc. NO-1210.

[351] Nuremberg Doc. 3868-PS, IMT XXXIII, 275ff; see also IMT XI, 458ff. and Poliakov-Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pp. 127ff.

[352] IMT XI, 438ff.

[353] Gilbert, *op. cit.*, 448ff.

[354] Nuremberg Doc. NI-035/037 and NI-039/041.

It is peculiar that only parts of the testimonies of Rudolf Höss that originated in the Nuremberg trial period have been made public. Neither the content of his interrogations by the British military police nor that of the transcripts of the hearing from the period of May 14 to May 22, 1946 is known. In the standard works on this subject, they are not even mentioned. The reason for this could be that they make no substantive contribution, but it is likely that there are stronger reasons for suppressing them.

In his Cracow memoir, Höss himself describes how his initial interrogation was conducted by the British military police. This part could very well be authentic. It reads:[355]

> I was arrested on March 11, 1946... I was maltreated by the Field Security Police. I was taken to Heide where I was put in the same barracks from which I had been released by the British eight months earlier. At my first interrogation, [135] evidence was obtained by beating me. I do not know what is in the record, although I signed it. Alcohol and the whip were too much for me. The whip was my own, which by chance had got into my wife's luggage. It had hardly ever touched my horse, far less the prisoners.

One can very well imagine how this interrogation was carried out. It is well known that the “carrot and the stick” were among the traditional methods of persuasion used in the British Empire. Thus it is quite believable that “alcohol and the whip” served this function in the case of Höss. The outcome of this must have corresponded less to the truth than to the notions of the interrogating officers, which were formed by a hate-filled atrocity propaganda.

Of course, Broszat now claims that the content of the eight-page typewritten record of this interrogation, which was signed by Höss at 2:30 A.M. on the night of March 14, 1946, does not depart appreciably from that to which Höss testified and/or committed to writing in Nuremberg or Cracow.[356] Broszat probably mentions this to demonstrate that, in view of the alleged agreement of all of the testimonies attributed to Höss, there can be no doubt about the correctness of their contents. Leaving aside the fact that, Broszat's claims to the contrary, the Nuremberg testimony and the Cracow memoirs are hardly in agreement on every point, such a conclusion is unwarranted. If anything, the existence of points of agreement would tend to prove the opposite. For it cannot be doubted that the transcript Höss signed, two days after his arrest and after a midnight interrogation during which he was subjected to abusive treatment and —evidently— pressured with threats, a document the contents of which he did not understand and for which he could not be held responsible, had nothing, absolutely nothing, to do with the truth.

Even later, there does not seem to have been much change in the way Rudolf Höss was treated, so that when he gave his testimony in Nuremberg he was probably a broken man, from whom his tormentors were able to obtain any testimony they desired. That becomes clear from further statements by Höss in *Kommandant in Auschwitz* (p.145). There it is stated:

> After some days I was taken to Minden-on-the-Weser, the main interrogation centre in the British Zone. There I received further rough treatment at the hands of the English public prosecutor, a major. The conditions in the prison accorded with this behaviour. After three weeks, to my surprise, I was shaved and had my hair cut and I was allowed to wash. My handcuffs had not been previously removed since my arrest.

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[355] *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 145. During my research I received reliable confirmation from several quarters that Höss had been severely mistreated at his first interrogation.

[356] *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 145, footnote 1.

The famous affidavit that Höss signed on April 5, 1945 must have been made at this time. After three weeks he had been broken, to the point where he could be treated more humanely and even introduced as a witness in Nuremberg. Kaltenbrunner's attorney had requested that [136] Höss appear as a witness for the defence. This was why Höss was suddenly released from his handcuffs and, after weeks(!), even allowed to wash himself again. However, the request for him to testify would probably not have been granted, and only the extorted affidavit of April 5, 1946 been presented, had the "brainwashing" not proved successful and there been no longer anything to fear from his testimony. Naturally, Höss was not permitted to write this in his memoirs. Of his stay in Nuremberg he does state there that the "interrogations were extremely unpleasant, not so much physically, but far more because of their strong psychological effect" something that Höss, according to his memoirs, did not think he could hold against his interrogators, since "they were all Jews" (*op. cit.*, p. 146).

In the case of all these quotations from the notes composed by Höss in the Cracow prison after his extradition to Poland, one must take into account that these notes were most certainly "revised" by the Poles. We shall consider this subject at greater length later on. In the process the passages relating to the interrogations before his extradition were possibly watered down even further. If this written testimony on the brainwashing to which Höss was subjected was not completely expunged, it was only to give the memoir as a whole a semblance of plausibility. Since it was supposed to be a voluntarily written autobiography, statements about a matter that might later become public knowledge could not, of course, be omitted. It would have been too conspicuous if Höss, the former commandant of an "infamous" concentration camp, had received better treatment than other concentration camp personnel, who, after their arrest, were subjected to many brutalities, as everyone, in Germany at least, knows. Moreover, the Polish-Jewish editors of these memoirs may not have been averse to pillorying in this way the interrogation methods of their Western "friends" while making their own conduct seem absolutely correct. Later on we shall examine this matter in detail.

Thus, in the so-called Höss memoirs we have, despite the fact that they are quite restrained and have possibly been doctored in favour of the victors, rather unambiguous confirmation of the use of physical and psychological torture, the like of which was not infrequently applied to witnesses and defendants at that time in the Allied trials against Germans.[357] The correctness of the memoirs on this point is not to be doubted.

In addition, Höss —like others— may have been brought to the state of compliance that astonished and dismayed the defendants in the IMT trial by a promise that he would not find his way into the dock if the testimony he gave were in agreement with the statements initially extorted from him. Obviously, he had not considered that he might be extradited to Poland; otherwise his

[357] Until now reliable information as to these kinds of methods was available only for the lesser trials staged by the Allies. According to research by Werner Maser things were apparently no different at the main trial in Nuremberg, the so-cafled IMT Trial which up until now has been generally presented as a "fair Trial." See Maser, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 80ff., 99ff. See also Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190.

conduct at Nuremberg would be [137] incomprehensible. It is possible that promises made to him on this score were broken.

Thus in Nuremberg it surely was not particularly difficult to get Höss to hold to the line of testimony in his first statements, which were the product of brutal coercion. The conclusion that Broszat tries to draw from the points of agreement in all of his testimonies is not very convincing. Despite his preparation beforehand, Höss departed from the pattern of his prescribed testimony when, under cross-examination by Dr. Kaufmann, the defence attorney for Kaltenbrunner, he made the following statements in regard to the treatment of inmates in the concentration camps —including Auschwitz:[358]

> It was not the case that the aim was to put to death as many people as possible or to exterminate inmates, for what always mattered most to the Reichsführer was to employ all hands for the production of munitions.

And again:

> Brutality and torture in the concentration camps... were not, as is frequently assumed, a methodical practice, but excesses committed by individual SS leaders, subalterns, and troops who laid hands on prisoners.

Höss does not state here that Jewish prisoners constituted an exception. They, too, were needed for the war effort.[359] It is a proven fact that until just before the fall of the Reich hundreds of thousands of Jews, some of whom had been transported back to the Reich, were working in the German armaments industry. As to brutalities and tortures, Höss unfortunately forgot to mention that the men and women in the *Häftlingsführung* —that is, inmates themselves— were largely responsible for them, as the former concentration camp inmate Rassinier has mercilessly revealed, particularly in his book *Die Lüge des Odysseus* [The Lie of Odyssesus]]*.. Infringements by the SS personnel were severely punished by SS courts, so far as they became aware of them. It was for this very reason that SS judges —*e.g.*, Dr. Morgen— were active in the camps.

These statements by Höss were, as we have said, certainly not intended as part of the program. Incidentally, the interrogation of Höss by the defence attorney Dr. Kaufmann was unfortunately conducted so as not to cast doubt on the alleged mass extermination of Jews at Auschwitz. That may have seemed correct to the defence, but it certainly did not pay off, and, in retrospect, must be considered not only mistaken, but indeed irresponsible, in so far as the history of the German people is concerned. Here the defence wasted a chance to destroy, or at least cast doubt on, the Auschwitz legend at the very outset, something for which the lack of documentary proof and the contradictory and largely improbably statements of the witnesses provided ample op-portunity. Höss could perhaps have been induced to testify more [138] truthfully had the defence phrased its questions differently and more relevantly. Instead, the defence attorney, Dr. Kaufmann, operated largely with suggestive questions, the answers to which had to favour the basic contention of the prosecution, that millions of Jews had been gassed at Auschwitz. In this, he was obviously sticking to the Höss affidavit of April 5, 1946, without giving any consideration to the fact that, given the circumstances, it might have been made under duress.

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[358] IMT XI, 446.

[359] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 158f. (Broszat) and 445f. (Krausnick).

* Originally published in French as *Le Mensonge d'Ulysse*.– T.F.

Thus it was easy for the prosecutor, Colonel Amen, to bring Höss quickly back to the "right line." He simply read for him the most important points of his affidavit, and Höss obediently affirmed the "correctness" of the prosecution's questions with a curt military "Jawohl" or a similar brief affirmative expression. The almost incredible fact that this affidavit had been drawn up in English and signed by Höss in that form has, of course, provoked a number of sarcastic remarks from Butz.[360] Still, it seems necessary to probe into this more deeply, since this circumstance must be of great significance in the evaluation of this document as evidence.

In the final paragraph of Höss's signed affidavit it is stated:[361]

> I understand English as it is written above. The above statements are true; this declaration is made voluntarily and without compulsion; after reading the statement, I have signed and executed the same at Nuernberg, Germany, on the fifth day of April 1946.

The very wording of this text proves that Höss did not compose the statement himself, but that he was presented with a finished product to sign. Even if Höss had some degree of mastery of the English language, he would have probably made such an important declaration in his native German, had he formulated it himself. It is very doubtful that Höss had sufficient knowledge of English to write in it. His personal and occupational development, as he depicts it in his Cracow autobiography, speaks against any mastery of the English language. In this matter, too, Höss's autobiographical notes can hardly be disputed, since they are —as one can tell from a number of Broszat's footnotes in the Institute für Zeitgeschichte edition— in agreement with the *curriculum vitae* in the SS personnel file on Höss.[362]

According to his autobiography, Höss did not have an academic degree. After four years of primary schooling, he attended a gymnasium for a few years. His father wanted him to become a clergyman, and so it may be assumed that he attended a humanistic gymnasium. At the humanistic gymnasium, the first foreign language taught was traditionally —and is even today— Latin. A modern foreign language is not added sooner than the third school year. In the southwestern part of the Reich, where Höss spent his early years and attended school, that language was, as a rule, French; English usually came later as an elective subject. Höss himself has written nothing about which modern foreign language [139] he studied at the gymnasium. Even had this been English, he could have received, at most, three years of training in the language. For by his own wish and with the help of an officer who was well-disposed towards him, he became a soldier at 16 years of age —in 1916— during the first World War. Three years of English in a humanistic gymnasium, where the emphasis is on the classical languages, could not be expected to have provided him with a perfect or even a superficial knowledge of this language. Nowhere do we find any indication that Höss had a gift for languages. After the war, he did not continue his education. Instead, he joined the Freikorps Rossbach, and fought in the Baltic lands, in Mecklenburg, in the Ruhr, and in Upper Silesia. In 1923, he was sentenced to ten years hard labour for participating in a political assassination. Thanks to an amnesty in 1928, he gained his freedom, and worked for a while in agriculture. A member of the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) from 1922, Höss joined the SS in 1933, and, from 1934

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360 Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-123.

361 IMT XXXIII, 276.

362 See for the following *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 23ff., with footnotes by Broszat.

on, as an active member of the SS, served continually in the concentration camps. It seems nearly out of the question that in all the intervening years after the First World War he could have mastered English or even maintained a proficiency beyond the classroom level. Rather, one can assume that in the turbulent years after the war he would have forgotten whatever basic knowledge of the English language he had acquired.

These considerations would at least raise doubts that Höss understood English sufficiently well to compose the affidavit of April 5, 1946, or even to be able to comprehend its full meaning. His assurance to the contrary, which obviously no more came from his pen than did the rest of the document, runs counter to the truth. Under the circumstances, it can only be called a grim joke, just like his statement that he made the declaration "voluntarily and without compulsion." This document can never lay claim to the rank of a contemporary historical source. At the Jerusalem trial, the defence attorney for Adolf Eichmann, Dr. Servatius, aptly remarked as follows:[363]

> The statements of Höss are characterized by utter submissiveness. He even employs the vocabulary of his accusers, describing working inmates as slave labourers. He never goes against the grain, and his statements seem to have been tailored to what was expected of him.

Under the circumstances, it seems unnecessary to me to analyse in further detail the Höss affidavit and the rest of Höss's testimony before the International Military Tribunal.[364] His statements are questionable on many points, as will now be illustrated with a few examples.

In response to a question from Dr. Kaufmann, Höss stated that when Himmler communicated to him the order for the extermination of the Jews, in the summer of 1941, he was told to keep it "strictly a secret from everyone" including his immediate superior, SS-Gruppenführer [140] Glücks. When asked what position Glücks occupied, Höss pointedly replied that at the time he had been "so to speak, the inspector of concentration camps... and took his orders directly from the ReichsführerSS."[365] Obviously, there is an inexplicable contradiction between these two statements. If Glücks were the Inspector of Concentration Camps, the alleged extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz and elsewhere could not have been kept secret from him. The order Höss imputes to Himmler was therefore senseless, and it is improbable that Himmler would have given such a senseless order. Hence the whole story of Himmler's direct order to Höss is incredible.

Furthermore, in paragraph 4 of his affidavit, Höss states that mass executions by gassing in Auschwitz began "during the summer of 1941" *i.e.*, immediately after the alleged order had been issued, which is another impossibility, since the installations for gassing could not yet have been present. For, according to paragraph 6 of his affidavit, after the alleged issuing of the order by Himmler, Höss investigated the feasibility of mass extermination at the Treblinka concentration camp, where, from the beginning of 1941 —so he claims the commandant of the camp told him— 80,000 Jews had allegedly been liquidated with carbon monoxide gas. According to his affidavit, Höss did not think this method was "very efficient." He continues: "So when I set up the

[363] Servatius, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
[364] An excellent analysis of the Höss affidavit is contained in Butz's book, *op. cit.*, pp. 103ff.
[365] IMT XI, 440f.

extermination building at Auschwitz, I used Zyklon B, which was crystallized Prussic Acid that we dropped into the death chamber from a small opening."

At what time this "extermination building" —as it is called in the affidavit— was constructed is not stated. In any case, it did not exist at the time the order was allegedly issued in the summer of 1941, so the "gassings" could not have commenced that summer either, as Höss is made to say a few paragraphs before.[366] It is also interesting that only *one* extermination building is mentioned here, and it must have been quite small, since it had only "a small opening." In his subsequent testimony before the International Military Tribunal, Höss, in contradiction to this, refers to "provisional installations" and "newly erected crematoria" as places of extermination, without specifying how many of them there were.[367]

These and other contradictions permeate Höss's entire testimony at Nuremberg. Thus it must be judged a lamentable failure on the part of the defence not to have seized on a single one of these dubious points in order to establish the incredibility of his whole testimony. It seems almost as though the defence worked hand in glove with the prosecution to prove the alleged extermination of millions of Jews.

Of course, Höss believed he could put himself in the position of "turning state evidence" if he shaped his testimony accordingly.[368] It is possible that the prospect of this had been held out to him. It is also possible that the will of this man had been so completely [141] broken that he simply said anything demanded of him for fear of further mistreatment and torture. That would also explain the contradictions in his statements, since he was interrogated by various persons, each of whom sought to give a particular shading to the legend.

In this connection, the psychological verdict Gilbert pronounced on Höss is interesting. On page 253 of his *Nuremberg Diary*, he writes:

> There is too much apathy to leave any suggestion of remorse and even the prospect of hanging does not unduly distress him. One gets the general impression of a man who is intellectually normal but with the schizoid apathy, insensitivity and lack of empathy that could hardly be more extreme in an outright psychotic.

In this description, one can clearly see the picture of a man who is psychologically broken and who has surrendered his will to his persecutors, as it was expressed by Dr. Servatius, Eichmann's defence attorney in the Jerusalem trial. The cause of Höss's lack of emotion at the prospect of being hanged, which Gilbert found striking, could have been that he had been promised his life, if not his freedom, should he cooperate with the prosecution. Perhaps both motives played a role in the case of Höss. What is the value of the testimony of such a man?

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[366] The Höss entries made at Cracow contain different statements as to the beginning of the alleged Jewish exterminations at Auschwitz. All the times he gave at Cracow are dated after the time he gave in the affidavit (summer 1941). See *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 123, 154f.

Höss's alleged Treblinka visit is also questionable, at least in regard to the date indicated in the affidavit; see Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

[367] IMT XI, 442. The famous two "farm houses" in which the gassing is supposed to have taken place before the completion of the crematoria, do not appear until Höss's statements in Cracow: See *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 123, 154ff. In the statement which Höss allegedly composed for the prison psychologist Gilbert in April 1946, he speaks of only one old farm house as an extra gas chamber (besides the four crematoria); see Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 448ff.

[368] Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

Before we leave the subject of Höss, we must make a few remarks about the handwritten statement, dated April 24, 1946, that Höss —so the American psychologist Gilbert claims— wrote for him after being cross-examined as a witness. Höss allegedly produced this statement, written in pencil, after Gilbert told him that Göring expressed doubts about the technical feasibiity of the mass murders to which Höss had attested during his various interrogations.[369] This document is, both as to its origins and its content, extremely questionable. It is hardly conceivable, of course, that Gilbert forged it in order to make his *Nuremberg Diary* more interesting. Yet Gilbert undoubtedly influenced the content. In any case, it is noteworthy that this document, in which Höss for the first time gives details about the implementation of the alleged murder of the Jews at Auschwitz, was not accepted into the IMT record. It did not surface until it was used as evidence at the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, and supposedly can be found in the record of that trial. Broszat, who is certainly familiar with the statement, does not include it with the other written statements by Höss that he mentions in note 1 to page 8 of the book *Kommandant in Auschwitz*. He refers only to Gilbert's notes on the conversations he had with Höss in his jail cell between April 9 and 16, 1946. The Höss statement of April 24, 1946, is —so far as I can tell— also completely ignored in the rest of the literature on this subject.

Why this "document" is ignored —particularly by Broszat— can be readily explained. Various passages in it contradict the Cracow memoirs of Rudolf Höss, which were published by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, with commentary by its director, Broszat, and which are regarded as [142] the most important historical source on the alleged murder of the Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau, despite their lack of credibility. The use of the Gilbert document as evidence at the Jerusalem trial would be inexplicable unless one took into account the fact that in trials of this kind only documents that fit in with each other are employed. It is possible that the necessary agreement was created in the intervening years. Both documents were written in pencil. With this observation we shall let the matter temporarily rest. Later we shall consider in context the aforementioned contradictions that emerge from a comparison of the Höss statements in the *Nuremberg Diary* and *Kommandant in Auschwitz*.

By the way, Gilbert's *Nuremberg Diary* is not free of internal contradictions in regard to what Höss allegedly said. For example, Gilbert writes that, on April 9, 1946, Höss related the alleged procedure of "gassing" to him, stating, *inter alia*, that the victims went to the gas chambers without resistance because they believed they were going to the showers, but —to use the exact words— "instead of water, we turned on poison gas" (*op. cit.*, p. 243). Thus, according to this account, the gas streamed out of the shower heads, something with which we are familiar from other accounts —accounts with which Gilbert was possibly familiar himself. In the alleged pencil-written statement reproduced by Gilbert, it is stated, however (*op. cit.*, p. 449):

As soon as the entire transport was in the chamber, the door was shut, and simultaneously the gas was dropped in from above through special openings —it was Zyklon B, a crystalline hydrocyanic acid which vaporizes immediately.

[369] See also Rassinier, *Das Drama der Jüden Europas*, p. 54.

Such contradictions in the statement of one and the same man, a man who allegedly knew exactly what the gassing procedure was, should give one pause for thought.[370]

The Soviets were supposed to present an "evidential document" of a special kind at the IMT trial. We are speaking of the "Report of the Soviet War Crimes Commission, May 6, 1945"[371] which today is practically unknown. According to the claims of this commission, the report was based on German documents found in individual concentration camps, and sundry other "materials" as well as on the statements of numerous witnesses who had testified before the commission. The report does not pertain only to Auschwitz, but it contains probably the most exhaustive and complete description of it in existence at the time. This report is also worthy of note primarily because it deviates on fundamental points —especially in its description of the alleged extermination facilities at Auschwitz-Birkenau— from the WRB Report as well as from the current description of the "death factory." Since the Soviets presumably insisted on the introduction of this "evidentiary material" into the trial, it is possible that one of the reasons the WRB Report was shelved for this trial was to avoid grave contradictions. The Soviets were, of course, the only ones who at that time had access to the former [143] concentration camps in the East, and, therefore, greater weight had to be assigned to their version of Auschwitz.

Since then, the "Report of the Soviet War Crimes Commission" —like the WRB Report— has fallen into oblivion. That is not surprising, since its fantasy-filled depictions obviously could not be substantiated, except with a few statements from unidentifiable "witnesses" despite the Commission's assurances to the contrary. While it may therefore seem basically superfluous to treat this report in detail, its most important statements on the alleged "extermination installations" should, for purposes of comparison, be set forth here. Lack of space alone would not permit us to repeat all the comments about Auschwitz.

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[370] Naturally, Gilbert's version of what he had heard could be responsible for the contradictions. Gilbert was certainly far from objective as can be gathered from different remarks in his book. For instance, he states that he had already seen "proof of the barbarity of the Nazis in places like Dachau concentration camp" (*op. Cit.*, p. 9). Gilbert's duty as a prison psychologist was to keep the accused and the witnesses under such control that the commandant was kept informed at all times.about their state of niind" (*op. cit.*, p. 9) His chief fünction was doubtless to spy on them and to "influence" them toward accepting the charges. Thus advice was sought, for instance, when new seating arrangements were being made for the accused at lunch (*op. cit.*, p. 158).

His method consisted, according to his own words, "in relaxed (!) conversation" (*op. cit.*, p. 9). As psychologist, he must have known that under the circumstances one could not expect normal reactions from the accused.

By the way, he never made written notes in their presence, but only after leaving the jail, sometimes not until evening. Thus he could have confused many facts.

One can only shake one's head regarding Gilbert's remark that the accused had inevitably revealed to him character and motives (*op. cit.*, p. 10). At the very least this is an extreme overestimation of his capabilities as a psychologist. One sees this clearly in his incorrect evaluation of Rudolf Hess (*op. cit.*, pp. 16f.), which Hess later corrected —as Gilbert himself admits (*op. cit.*, p. 57).

Altogether, it can be said that Gilbert's writings can be used as a historical source only with great reservations. For the most part they offer little more than an insight into the atmosphere surrounding the trials.

[371] Nuremberg Doc. 008-USSR, IMT XXXIX, 241ff.

The report on Auschwitz begins with the statement that after the occupation of the grounds of the former concentration camp were found "remains of crematoria and gas chambers" which the "Germans had blown up during their retreat" (*op. cit.*, p. 242). In the report no mention is made of the dimensions, arrangements, or location of the "remains" of these structures. Nor was the Tribunal presented with relevant photographs, as should obviously have been done.

Further, it is stated in the report that the Germans designated the "gas chambers" as "baths for special purposes" and that the unsuspecting victims were deceived by signs to that effect. The rooms for gassings were allegedly located in "cellars or special buildings beside the crematoria." Moreover, there were two detached "baths" the corpses from which were incinerated in open-air fires. As proof that people had been killed in these places the commission adduced the discovery of numerous canisters of "Zyklon poison" (*op. cit.*, p. 242). Evidently, this was the insecticide Zyklon B. These muddled statements about the gasssing rooms are significant.

The commission carelessly made more specific statements about the crematory equipment. According to them, the four crematoria in Birkenau had, altogether, 12 "ovens" with 46 "retorts." In view of the claims as to the number of people exterminated, this is, of course, not many; therefore, the claims about the ovens have been adjusted: "every retort... could hold three to five corpses" and it took only "about 20 to 30 minutes" to reduce a corpse to ashes (*op. cit.*, p. 244). Even in the most modern crematoria, it is not possible to achieve results in so short a time, and certainly was not technically possible back then. We find internal contradictions in this report as well, which the commission in its zeal evidently overlooked (*op. cit.*, p.245).

It is only to be expected that the familiar "high flames" shooting out the crematoria chimneys are not omitted in this report (*op. cit.*, p.251). Perhaps here we even have the source of this myth. Despite the faulty construction implied by the flames, these miraculous crematoria were, according to the Commission's report, capable of the following performance (*op. cit.*, p.261):
[144]

Crematorium I (Auschwitz main camp), which allegedly was in existence for only 24 months	9,000 monthly
Crematorium II, over 19 months	90,000 monthly
Crematorium III, over 18 months	90,000 monthly
Crematorium IV, over 17 months	45,000 monthly
Crematorium V, over 18 months	45,000 monthly
Total number of corpses cremated monthly	279,000

Taking into consideration additional incinerations of corpses outdoors and temporary breakdowns of the crematoria, the Commission estimates that a total of not less than four million people were murdered at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

One notes the "accuracy" that was achieved in these estimates, despite the fact, mentioned in the Commission's report, that only the ruins of the crematoria buildings were available for inspection. Such estimates could not have been derived from the testimony of witnesses, and documents relating to the subject certainly had not been discovered, or else the Soviets would have presented them.

Naturally, none of the witnesses to whom reference is made in the report were called to testify before the court. The victors wished to spare themselves the embarrassment of contradictions, or even retractions. The report itself is of

no importance to historians; its entire contents leave no doubt whatsoever about that. The very fact that it was available by May 6, 1945, although the Soviets had not occupied the Auschwitz region until the second half of January 1945, shows it contains more speculation —not to say lies— than established facts.

This completes our treatment of the essential witness testimony in the main Nuremberg trial. It could —as we have observed— hardly render the Auschwitz "death camp" legend believable, even though it provided the Tribunal with sufficient "facts" for its decision. Historians, however, will have to use different criteria than those used by the judges, who were not looking for the truth, but for proof of the German crimes, in which they already believed and in which they probably had to believe.[372]

The twelve trials which followed, in which only the Americans took part, produced no further testimony of great importance on the Auschwitz complex, since otherwise it would have found its way into the literature on the subject. Even Reitlinger, who extensively and even exhaustively utilized these trials for his book *Die Endlösung*, in essence supported the Auschwitz "death camp" thesis only with the claims of Rudolf Höss in the IMT trial, insofar as he did not rely on witness reports that originated outside these trials.

Nevertheless, we do not wish to overlook one witness from the trial of leading employees of the IG-Farben Works, since we shall be dealing with him again later on. This is a certain Pery Broad, former SS-Rottenführer in the political department at the Auschwitz main camp, and a rather inscrutable character. While a prisoner of war of the British, he [145] had — as he confirmed when he was a defendant in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial— composed a report on the Auschwitz concentration camp, which evidently procured his early release.[373] The particulars of this report, which, strange to say, remained practically unknown for an entire decade, certainly cannot be substantiated today. We shall return to this report in another place. Presumably, the British at that time passed the report to the Poles, since, even though Auschwitz was part of the territory of the German Reich, they considered it part of Poland. The Poles probably withheld the report for purposes of further revision before making it public —at the time of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, when Broad was in the dock— in the form of a printed brochure. The extent to which this brochure corresponds to the original may be questioned.

The personal narrative Broad wrote as a prisoner of war was not used as evidence in the so-called IG-Farben trial, but a sworn statement, six pages in length, which he made expressly for this trial, probably was.[374] Whether or not Broad also testified in person I do not know.

In this affidavit, Broad first describes how, in the spring of 1942, he observed, from the service building of the political department, a "gassing" of

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[372] See also the articles by Heinrich Härtle and Prof. Michael Connors in *Sieger Tribunal* (pp. 36ff., 97ff.)

[373] Rawicz, who published this report in his book (*op. cit.*, pp. 8ff.), is rather taciturn in his statements regarding Broad.

[374] Nuremberg Doc. NI-11984 (photocopy in the possession of the author). Excerpts from the document are published in Gerhard Schönberner's *Wir haben es gesehen* (*op. cit.*, pp. 277ff.) The whereabouts of the original document is naturally - as with almost all such documents - unknown.

some 200 people in the old crematorium at Auschwitz. In reality, he had —as his statement reveals— only seen these persons taken into the courtyard of the crematorium, and observed that two SS men were busying themselves on the roof of the crematorium. Everything else is based on speculation and hearsay, including his claims about the construction "at the end of 1942" of "four large crematoria with adjoining gas chambers" in Birkenau. It seems questionable that Broad was ever in Birkenau. His statement seems to have been designed to show that everyone who came into the vicinity of Auschwitz or who was employed in the camp must have known of the murder of the Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau. In this connection, Broad expressly mentions the civilian workers employed in the construction of the "extermination facilities" the travelers on passing trains, the personnel accompanying the transport trains of Jews (*Ordnungspolizei* and railways officials), the SS personnel, the inmates, and also the population of the surrounding area. The glow of some ten large outdoor fires —according to Broad, "200-1,000 people were burnt each time on the funeral pyres"— was "visible within a radius of 30 kilometers" and from the same distance the "unmistakable odor of burning flesh could be smelled."[375]

It is clear that the purpose of this statement, which, according to its preamble, was made "voluntarily and without compulsion" was to incriminate the defendants, employees of IG-Farben, who naturally had not noticed any of these fantastic phenomena —because they did not exist. The Broad affidavit is dubious simply on account of its exaggerations, leaving aside the fact that the major part of it is based obviously not on Broad's own observations, but merely repeats rumours.

[146]

On one point, however, this affidavit seems to me to be of great importance, though in a different sense than its authors had in mind. In paragraph 11, it is stated:

> Sometime around 1944, a comprehensive booklet from a Polish resistance movement, in which exact claims were made about gassings and all kinds of other such operations and actions in Auschwitz, was sent to Auschwitz by the RSHA to obtain the views of the Auschwitz authorities on this matter.

Here one finds expression —certainly unintentional— of the fact that centrally ordered and planned mass gassings could not have taken place in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Otherwise, why would the Reich Security Main Office, which allegedly directed the mass exterminations through that key figure Eichmann, have requested an opinion on the claims made in this publication? If there were any truth to these charges, then it was because individuals or groups of persons, acting without authorization, took matters into their own hands at Auschwitz. This passage in the Broad affidavit proves without a doubt that the higher echelon immediately intervened whenever any irregularity in the

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[375] While in the literature the extermination of Jews is described as having been carried out in almost complete secrecy, on the other hand reference continues to be made to Broad's impossible report, for example by Reitlinger, who writes that travellers while passing Auschwitz "would crowd at the train windows to catch a glimpse of the crematory chimneys" (*op. cit.*, p. 116).

I myself never noticed any of these things during my stay in the Auschwitz area (July to September, 1944) nor did I hear any such thing from the people who fived there. Nothing is mentioned in Christophersen's report, *Die Auschwitz-Lüge*, covering the year 1944. Butz takes the position that the "stench" which Krauch and others (Trial of IG Farben) attested to during the trial originated from the industrial plants at Monowitz: It could have only been noticed at Auschwitz when the wind was blowing in a certain direction (*op. cit.*, pp. 118ff).

concentration camps came to its attention. We also know that from the testimony of the SS jurists Reinicke and Dr. Morgen in the IMT trial. Of course, Dr. Morgen was ordered to conduct investigations in Auschwitz for other reasons. The claims made in the publication of the Polish resistance movement must proved unfounded at that time.

By the way, the publication Broad mentions is presumably that collection of reports on the "Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp" the origin of which is still in the dark today and which was circulated at that time in many influential places —for example, the Vatican and the International Red Cross in Geneva— before it was made public in Washington in November 1944 as a report of the War Refugee Board. As a member of the political department at the Auschwitz concentration camp, Broad certainly must have read it himself, so it becomes clear what his source of "information" was, insofar as the prison camp statement and the Nuremberg affidavit really came from his own pen.

With this we can conclude the list of testimony from the "war crimes trials" of the Allies relevant to our investigation. In summation, it can only be stated that these trials no more brought to light testimony of any importance on the alleged extermination of Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau than they did documents. By their muddled and vague assertions, the witnesses made the legend more unbelievable than it already was. Though the participants in the trial completely ignored it, the legend was dealt a decisive blow by the contradictory statements made by the two main witnesses in the IMT trial about the actual site of the purported mass exterminations. In accordance with the WRB Report and the "official" version that later evolved, the former commandant Höss placed the extermination installation in Birkenau, while the former SS judge Dr. Morgen transferred it to the Monowitz industrial area. The two places are, as can be seen on any map, separated from each other by many kilometers: the one (Birkenau) is about three kilometers to the west of the city of Auschwitz, while the other (Monowitz) is about four to five kilometers east of it.[376]

No wonder there was silence about the Auschwitz "extermination camp" after the end of the Nuremberg trials in 1949.

The Further Evolution and "Securing" of the Legend

The literature of Auschwitz memoirs did not make its hesitant beginning until the second half of the 1950's. A new wave of Auschwitz propaganda began, if I am not mistaken, after the Jewish physician Lucie Adelsberger published, in Autumn 1956, a "factual report" on her experiences at the Birkenau camp, entitled simply *Auschwitz*. A purported reader of the account states in the epilogue at the back of the little book that he could understand how "one just could not physically bear to read these pages to the end." Those who have retained their healthy common sense can take at least this statement

[376] Butz mentions the testimony of a former SS physician, Dr. Münch, at the IG Farben trial. According to this, the crematoria and gas chambers were located "one or one and a half kilometres southwest of the camp Birkenau, camouflaged by a small wood" (*op. cit.*, p. 183). This witness was stationed at a sub-camp Raisko, approximately 4 kilometres southeast of Birkenau. As is evident, he knew nothing of the extermination facilities from his own observation. He is a particularly characteristic example of the complaisant witness.

in the book at face value, since the turgid style of the account is sometimes enough to make one sick to the stomach.

The writer herself claims she was assigned as a physician to the gypsy camp at Birkenau in the spring of 1943. According to Smolen's groundplan of Birkenau, the gypsy camp was located in the immediate vicinity of the camp infirmary, which was in the neighborhood of the crematoria. Adelsberger thus certainly had the opportunity to observe the "death factory" continuously. However, her description raises grave doubts as to whether she was ever actually on the spot. There is practically no difference between it and corresponding reports from the early postwar years. Many details might actually have been copied from them. In any case, this "factual report" shows that all the stops were pulled when Auschwitz was reintroduced as a topic of discussion. Therefore I should like to quote it in some detail.

Though there are verifiable examples to the contrary, Adelsberger claims that in Auschwitz the elderly, the weak, the sick, and those otherwise unfit for labour were automatically "selected" by which she means, "chosen for gassing and the cremation that followed it;" likewise, all children under the age of 14 and their mothers, or those who had taken them under their wing, were treated in this way (*op. cit.*, pp.81-82).[377] Anybody who found this believable would, after reading the statements that follow it, realize that the author is not to be taken seriously, as when she writes (*op. cit.*, p.82):

> Officially, we were not supposed to know anything about the selections, even as the flames mounted into the sky before our very eyes, and when we were practically suffocated by the odor of burning flesh and by dense smoke.

[148]

Hallucinations? Uncritical repetition of rumours as personal experience? Conscious lies? This is the question that arises continually in the face of such far-fetched allegations.[378]

Yet the Adelsberger woman intensifies her lurid fantasies in the following depiction of the alleged extermination of the Hungarian Jews, of

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[377] Well-known to the contrary are:

a) Anne Frank, who came to Birkenau in September 1944, and from there was transferred to Bergen-Belsen, where she is supposed to have died during a typhus epidemic (Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 and 384).

b) The mother of the famous Austrian Socialist leader and pure Jew Benedikt Kautsky, who arrived at Birkenau at the end of August 1944, when she was over 80 years old, according to a report in the Social Democratic *Wiener Arbeiterzeitung* (December 1945). There she was given a private room because of her illness. Despite the utmost care she died of her illness (from a report in *Nation Europa*, Issue 5-May 1970, pp. 41ff).

c) Soviet documentary photograph from the magazine *Sowjetunion* Nr. 3/1975, pp. 18f. (*Denk mit*, series 3/1975, pp. 56f.). See also footnote 205 on page 105.

d) In the Auschwitz trial at Frankfurt witnesses who had come to Auschwitz as children were called.

The author apparently isn't aware that the very existence of a camp hospital at Birkenau contradicts her version.

[378] The crematoria of Birkenau were of the most modern construction. This is always insisted upon; otherwise the claims as to the crematory capacity would stand contradicted. In a modern crematorium, the fuel must produce in the ovens the high temperatures necessary for the fast and complete burning of bodies. If the fuel goes up the chimney in the form of flames, the greater part of the energy is lost. No engineer would construct such a crematory oven. Prisoners who maintain that flames shot from the chimneys of the crematoria are either repeating what they have heard or lying. On the technology of the crematoria, see Butz's informative treatment (*op. cit.*, pp. 120).

whom —she reports— 14,000 were gassed and cremated daily during the period from May to July 1944:[379]

> We could observe all the details, for at that time the final stop of the railway was not Auschwitz, as it was at the time of our arrival, but Birkenau, or more correctly, the crematorium, because the railhead was located scarcely 100 meters from the crematoria. (The frequently discussed plan to extend the railway right up to the crematoria and install a moving staircase directly to the gassing area was never realized.)

It is really astonishing what ultramodern plans were at that time being contemplated to increase the comforts of reaching the "gas chambers!" Even more astonishing is the fact that Frau Adelsberger evidently was privy to the secret conferences of the SS leadership at which these plans were formulated. Most astonishing of all is that there are people who credit the author when she writes this and similar nonsense; otherwise, her "factual report" would not have been printed and would not be in almost every public library. But let us read on:

> We saw how the people were standing in the middle of the street in Birkenau where the railway ended... a long line of people of all ages... And when, after hours of waiting, a sharp command from the SS set this procession in motion... it disappeared momentarily behind treetops which formed a border along the curve of the street, then appeared on the other side. Individual groups turned off at the first crematoria, stopped there, and formed a queue, like people in famine-stricken countries before a grocer's shop or like the line that forms at a theatre on opening night, and waited to enter. The remainder continued along the street to Brescinke [sic] (which ran parallel to the gypsy camp), between the lush green meadows and yellow rape, with their skipping children and their prams, raising only a little dust in comparison to the speeding cars of the SS, an endless train of people.

When one compares this description with the ground plan of Birkenau published in the book *Auschwitz, 1940-1945*, by Kazimierz Smolen, Director of the Auschwitz Museum, one must come to the conclusion that either this ground plan is incorrect or Adelsberger is fantasizing. One really should proceed on the assumption that Smolen's ground plan is at least somewhat accurate. According to the ground plan, the railway line ended between the first two crematoria, and the gypsy camp was located between the camp infirmary and the men's camp, not along a street that led to "Brescinke" a place that did not exist. Perhaps what the author had in mind here was the Polish name for Birkenau —Brzezinka; but even then the route she describes cannot be reconstructed from the ground plan of the camp.

The nonsense dished up for the reader reaches a pinnacle in the rest [149] of her description of the extermination action, which —as should be readily apparent— Adelsberger never witnessed, despite her initial assurance that she was able to "observe all the details." She reports:

> At the Brescinke woods we lost sight of them, and after hardly an hour, flames ascended behind the Brescinke woods. The flames climbed high into the sky in two places. And the area in front of the crematoria where people had stood in line, waiting for entrance to their death chambers, was deserted. There, too, the flames were glowing, through the side windows, which otherwise seemed so innocuous and unsuspicious, exactly one hour after the people had entered, and mounted from the chimney. Five giant flames blazed day and night, and when they died down, new people came to provide them with fresh fuel, those reddish-yellow fires of wood and human substance. The sky was red from the embers, and the stars obscured. The air was polluted by the sweetish odor of corpses and the smell of burning human bodies and singed hair. The suffocating vapor from ashes lay heavy and smoky over the camp. Baal, the fire god of the Assyrians, couldn't hold a candle to Hitler, the god of the Nazis. Medieval burnings at the stake were sheer amateurism in comparison with the giant fires that were kindled at Auschwitz after the victims had been gassed (but not always killed)

[379] See Adelsberger (*op. cit.*, pp. 103ff.).

> in assembly-line fashion. When we awakened during the night —we who had witnessed this, and yet ate and slept like normal people —the barracks were lit brightly within by the lambent reflection of the huge fires. And when I got up, and sneaked through the back door of the block, and looked at the second crematorium, which was located across from the first one, I saw beside it the open fires into which the bodies of children were being thrown, some dead, others still alive; heard the screams of the children, saw how fire played on their tender bodies, and no metamorphosis of my being, in this life or the next, will ever expunge this vision from my soul.

Everything that had been circulated up to this point as rumour is here summarized: the "provisional" extermination actions in the woods at Birkenau, the assembly-line operation in the new crematoria, and, last but not least, the burning of living children in open fires. In such descriptions, this latter detail especially always does good service, and it has been repeatedly served up by a wide range of "eyewitnesses" —fairy-tale tellers— to gullible listeners. It is a particularly squalid attempt to exploit the emotionalism to which the majority of people are prone. Anybody who has carefully read this account will probably have noted that the crematoria(!), which were fueled only with "wood and human substance" began working "exactly one hour" after the prisoners had entered the "gas chambers." During this short time, the "gassings" would have to have taken place and —so the author reports— the hair been shorn and the gold teeth extracted from the corpses (Evidently all Jews had gold teeth!). However, the "special details" of "selected young, strong Jewish men" who were assigned these tasks must have been able to accomplish the feat. In passing, let it be noted that, according to Adelsberger, there must have been five crematoria in Birkenau, since she allegedly saw "five giant flames."

The slop this former inmate physician thinks she can feed the well-meaning and credulous German public here is pretty hard to swallow. [150] Yet that did not prevent her account from gaining subsequent notice in works claiming to be scholarly, though, prudently enough, she was not quoted word for word, since that would have provoked in every reader with any common sense either uproarious laughter or a resigned shaking of the head, according to his temperament. For this reason, too, I thought it appropriate to quote her account, which is typical of many others, in somewhat more detail.

At any rate, after Adelsberger's "pioneering act" there was again discussion of Auschwitz, and the number of reports relating to it increased. In the meantime, the Polish Communists —with substantial financial aid from the German taxpayers— had completed the transformation of the former Auschwitz concentration camp into the "Auschwitz Museum." Shortly thereafter, the final notes of the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, with which we shall deal later in more detail, were "prepared" for the international public. In 1958, they appeared for the first time in a German version, put out by the Institute for Contemporary History of Munich. The game which was to climax in the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, for which the preliminary investigations were commencing at approximately the same time, could now begin.

Meanwhile —in 1956— another noteworthy book appeared, a book which occupies a peculiarly hybrid position in the Auschwitz literature: Bernhard Klieger's *Der Weg, den wir gingen*. Bernhard Klieger is also a Jew, one of the many who evidently do not know why they were spared being gassed. In any case, he —like so many others— has no convincing explanation. But what he writes about Auschwitz is, astonishingly, not so bad as what one would

normally expect from books of this kind. His hardships, in the proper sense, did not begin until his evacuation from Auschwitz, as one can readily believe.

About Auschwitz itself —the so-called main camp— Klieger writes some really sensational things, if one compares his account with the usual descriptions of the camp. He speaks of well-furnished rooms, exemplary washing and toilet facilities, paved streets, bathing barracks, and disinfection chambers; he even expressly refers to Auschwitz as a "luxury camp" and says that prisoners who were transferred there from other concentration camps were surprised at the "modern and well maintained buildings" (*op. cit.*, p. 17). On the other hand, he claims that the "average duration of stay for a Jew in the camp was three days before he found his way to the crematorium or the funeral pyre" (*op. cit.*, p.26). He himself is, of course, living proof against this claim, which does not seem to be based on his own experience, since it apparently relates to the time before his arrival in Auschwitz. As Klieger relates further on, things changed after the beginning of the year 1944, under Obersturmführer Hössler, described by other prisoners as a beast in human form. Under him —says Klieger— the "camp lost the characteristics of a concentration camp. To our way of thinking, a golden age had [151] arrived, and one day Hössler went so far as to declare that he no longer recognized any difference between a Jew and a German from the Reich" (*op. cit.*, p. 31).[380]

On the same page, however, Klieger reports, somewhat in contradiction to his previous statement, that the "gassings in Birkenau... "accelerated to "gigantic proportions; 400,000 Hungarian Jews were exterminated within a few weeks."[381] Despite this, Auschwitz —he further states on page 31— increasingly took on an almost Jewish character, since Russians, Poles, and many Germans from the Reich were transported away."

Figure that one out if you can! There is hardly a logical explanation for the difference in treatment Klieger describes between Jews in Birkenau and in Auschwitz, since both camps were under the authority of the commandant of Auschwitz.[382] When Höss was transferred to Berlin at the end of 1943, nothing changed with respect to the combined administration of both camps. The Jews in Auschwitz would hardly have felt themselves in a "luxury camp" as Klieger

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[380] This report agrees completely with the impression I received on my several visits to the Auschwitz camp in 1944, on which I reported in *Nation Europa* (Nr. 10/1973). Of course, I expressed myself with rather more restraint than the Jewish former prisoner Klieger.

Benedikt Kautsky gives a similar impression in his book *Teufel und Verdammte*, with, however, noticeable restraint, when he writes that Auschwitz inmates were integrated into the work force according to their professional training, and that they often worked together with civilian workers, which led to a "relaxation of discipline" (*op. cit.*, p. 20). And he adds at another place (*Op. cit.*, p. 47), "for us that meant a great deal. Aside from the already mentioned fact that a prisoner had the opportunity to work according to his training, the mistreatment by the SS stopped almost completely; yes, I saw more than one instance of the SS issuing warnings and threats of punishment to civilian workers who mistreated prisoners."

One is again reminded in this connection that Kautsky was a Jew, and was by no means talking only about non-Jewish inmates.

[381] Butz has established, based on previously unknown sources, that the supposed extermination of Hungarian Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau didn't take place. This story, which is widely believed, is apparently a fabrication of Zionist circles. See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-171.

[382] The comparative organizational autonomy which Birkenau and the sub-camps referred to collectively as Monowitz enjoyed for an unspecified period of time -—there are contradictory statements in the literature as to its length— does not alter the fundamental fact of their subordination to the commander at Auschwitz. See Kaul, *Ärzte in Auschwitz*, pp. 55f., and *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, 414 (Krausnick).

suggests, if it were general knowledge that a systematic extermination of Jews was underway only a few kilometers away. As a whole, Klieger's account must be considered a mixture of correct statements and obviously false ones, including camp rumours and reports which he heard or read later.[383]

Klieger knows nothing about the frequently claimed shootings and gassings of Jews in the old crematorium of the main camp, although, as an inmate of the main camp, these could hardly have remained a secret to him. What he writes about the crematoria and "gas chambers" at Birkenau need not be described in detail here, since, by his own admission, he was never there, and so is only a hearsay witness. Nevertheless, let it be noted that he also "attests" to the existence of "five crematoria in Birkenau, each one of which had a gas chamber." Could it be that this much-circulated rumour is connected with the fact that the number five is the sacred number of the Jewish god, Jehovah?[384]

It would be carrying things too far if, within the framework of this book, we tried to treat even in a sketchy manner all the accounts of Auschwitz, which were published in increasing numbers during the following years. In the case of many of them, one begins to doubt whether the narrator was ever even at the site of the alleged events. This applies, for example, to Kitty Hart's account *Aber ich lebe*,[385] first published in England, which leaves the impression that the author was completely ignorant of the place. It is noteworthy, by the way, that according to Hart an Auschwitz inmate could evidently slip away from one labour detail without much difficulty and smuggle himself into another, or even go from one part of the camp to another and remain there the entire day or night. Typical of this as well as of most other accounts is that, as soon as the discussion turns to gas chambers and crematoria, a critical reader can discern from the very content that the "observations" [152] under consideration can be classified only as repetition of rumours. This seems to be the case with Kitty Hart who, after telling the reader that her barracks "even had proper windows with a view on the gas chambers and crematoria" goes on to say:

> I raised my head, and there, not more than fifty meters away, I saw something that struck me like a blow. I had already seen a lot, but never, never anything like this. I stood there hypnotized, and couldn't stir.[386]

This state of hypnosis must have been real, for what follows is pure hallucination:

> With my own eyes, I became a witness to a murder, not the murder of one person, but of hundreds of people, innocent people who had been taken, for the most part unsuspectingly, to a large hall. It was an unforgettable sight. Outside the low building was a ladder which reached up to a small trap door. A man in SS uniform quickly climbed up the ladder. At the top, the man put on a gas mask and gloves. Then he opened the trap door with

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[383] A characteristic example of this is the sentence with which Klieger concludes his report on the Birkenau crematories: "The cries for help and screams of fear of those in despair sounded from afar, and whoever heard them will never forget them." (*op. cit.*, p. 22).

Klieger could not have heard any screams from Birkenau at Auschwitz, because he was too far away. The author has so cleverly glossed over this fact that an uncritical and careless reader would get the impression that Klieger had heard them with his own ears.

Nevertheless, Klieger's report remains a useful source for conditions at the Auschwitz main camp, as one Jew experienced them.

[384] A former Birkenau prisoner named Robert Levy "testified" to six crematoria in Birkenau; see Poliakov-Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, p. 264.

[385] Published by Abelard-Schumann, London-New York-Toronto. The original English title: *I Am Alive!*

[386] On the following see Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 100ff.

> one hand, pulled a sack from his pocket, and quickly poured its contents, a white powder, inside, after which he closed the trap door immediately. He was back down quick as lightning, threw the ladder down on the grass, and ran away as though he pursued by the devil.
>
> At that very moment, horrible screams could be heard, and the desperate cries of suffocating people... After about five to eight minutes, all were dead...

After repeating the familiar stories about the treatment of the "gassing victims" by the *Sonderkommando*, she writes of the cremation of the corpses in the crematoria:

> Smoke billowed out of the chimneys, and soon tongues of flame shot out two meters high into the sky. The smoke became increasingly dense, dark, and more suffocating, and it had a most peculiar odor. The odor of burning corpses may be compared to that of burning feathers. The stench of this burnt fat and hair was unbearable. What we had heard in the other camps was actually true —the rumours were not exaggerated. Here were the death factories. When evening came, the sky was red, as though it were ablaze.

I believe that the account of this "eyewitness" needs no special commentary. Yet I cannot refrain from pointing out that this woman Hart must have had X-ray vision, since she could see inside the "large hall" of the building in front of her. By the way, the alleged perception of the odor of burning hair is one of the contradictions that keeps on recurring in the literature of this kind. It is a contradiction because at the same time it is stated that men of the *Sonderkommando* allegedly sheared the hair from the corpses before they were cremated.

Also, it seems appropriate to point out that fantastic tales of this kind, which are totally unrelated to reality, are in no way unique, but have been numerous, in constantly changing versions.

On the other hand, only a few of the accounts of the alleged exterminations in the "gas chambers" and crematoria of Auschwitz and Birkenau [153] contain verifiable details. Only those accounts are of importance to our investigation, and so, from now on, we intend to confine ourselves to the literature in which they appear. We shall compare these reports in a special section. The Report of the War Refugee Board, published in the U.S. the year before the war ended, a document to which we have already given general consideration, belongs to this group —indeed, it forms the framework, so to speak, of the entire legend. By means of a direct comparison, all of the unreality and contradictions of the legend will become vividly apparent. First, however, a complete overview will be given of the further development, from the beginnings of the 1960's onward, of the picture of Auschwitz that was created through the joint efforts of the multifarious forces with an interest in transforming the Auschwitz legend into a historical fact.

When in May of 1960, Adolf Eichmann, to whom for various reasons a key role in the alleged extermination of the Jews had been ascribed ever since the Nuremberg trials, was abducted to Israel from his adopted homeland Argentina, put on trial, and, finally, on December 15, 1961, condemned to death, the expanding Auschwitz literature naturally received additional momentum. During the Eichmann trial, the Dutch journalist Sassen, a former SS man who lived in Argentina and became acquainted with Eichmann there, gave the legend new nourishment. In the autumn of 1960, there appeared in the American magazine *Life* a series of accusatory articles, which —Sassen claimed— were based on a number of interviews Eichmann had granted him. An abridgement of Sassen's version had already appeared, in July of 1960, in the German illustrated weekly *Stern*. Eichmann, however, denied the

authenticity of the report of his discussions with Sassen, just as he denied the authenticity of the written notes on these discussions which Sassen had placed at the disposal of the Israeli prosecutors.[387] Hence this source, too, must be considered extremely questionable. With the exceptions of brief references, it has had practically no impact on the Auschwitz literature.[388] I have tried unsuccessfully to obtain the complete text of the Sassen report. Sassen has not replied to my inquiries. He did not, by the way, appear as a witness before the Jerusalem court.

That the Sassen report was not even used in the Jerusalem Eichmann trial emerges from Hannah Arendt's comments on the matter. She writes:

> Eichmann prepared comprehensive notes for the interview, which was recorded on tape and then rewritten with considerable cosmetic improvements by Sassen; the public prosecutor succeeded —by what means has not yet been revealed— in obtaining these and other notes in Eichmann's handwriting, and they were all admitted as evidence in the trial, though not the actual Sassen report.[389]

The authenticity of the notes was likewise not recognized by Eichmann, and the tape recordings no longer exist. All the notes attributed [154] to Eichmann are today supposedly kept in the National Archives of the State of Israel. So far as I know, they have not been made accessible to the public. There can be no doubt that all of these notes, as well as the Sassen report, would —had they been thought to have probative value— have acquired somewhat the same significance as a "contemporary historical source" as, for example, the alleged Höss memoirs, which we shall consider in particular in detail later. In fact, they are, as a rule, passed over without comment. In the depositions prepared for the Auschwitz trial by members of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich, not even a general reference to them is to be found.

Incidentally, Robert Pendorf claims in his book *Mörder und Ermordete* (Murderers and Victims) that he was able to inspect a 30-page handwritten manuscript of Eichmann's, as well as a large number of books in which Eichmann had written marginal notes.[390] His "evidence" which he quotes, seems even more questionable than Sassen's, especially since Pendorf does not supply any information about where it was found and where it is kept.

A few comments about the Eichmann trial itself may be added here. This trial was naturally conducted with no documents or witness testimony going beyond what had been already "established" at the earlier proceedings of the Allies. In this trial, too —as Hannah Arendt explains— "to a certain extent testimony based on hearsay... was admitted in evidence."[391] Eichmann's defence strategy essentially consisted in not disputing that mass exterminations took place at Auschwitz and elsewhere, while maintaining that his responsibility was limited to organizing railway transportation for the deportation of Jews to these camps, as he was under orders to do. He claimed that it was not until about six

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[387] Servatius, *op. cit.*, p. 68; Nellessen, *op. cit.*, pp. 153ff.; Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 184ff.; Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[388] As far as I could determine, only Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner present any excerpts from the transcripts of the tape allegedly made by Eichmann in Argentina. The authenticity of the excerpts cannot be checked and therefore must be doubted (see pp. 252f.). Insofar as their content bears on the extermination of Jews, they are so vague and unclear that they cannot be considered evidence.

[389] Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

[390] See the preface, p. 7.

[391] *Op. cit.*, p. 264; on this see Servatius, *op. cit.*, pp. 62ff.

to eight weeks after the beginning of the war with the Soviet Union that he first learned, from Heydrich, of Hitler's alleged order for the mass extermination of the Jews in the occupied Eastern territories.[392] Eichmann himself subscribed almost slavishly to the version that had been put in Höss's mouth about the time of the Führer's alleged order for the extermination of the Jews, for which there is no other evidence. Most revealing for our topic is Hannah Arendt's statement regarding Eichmann's alleged knowledge of the Auschwitz "death facilities":

> He had visited at different times the largest and most notorious death camp, Auschwitz, but the Auschwitz concentration camp in Upper Silesia, which covered an area of 40 square kilometers, was by no means only an extermination camp. It was a huge undertaking with close to 100,000 inmates in a variety of categories, including non-Jews and plain forced labourers. As a visitor, one could easily bypass the death facility, and Höss, with whom Eichmann had a good relationship, spared him this gruesome sight.[393]

Even Hannah Arendt, who, as a Jewess, is certainly not free of bias, is obviously convinced that Eichmann, contrary to all official claims, never saw the extermination facilities at Auschwitz. Naturally, she also [155] believes in the existence of such facilities. But according to her, no evidence for this is furnished by Eichmann's testimony.

We recall that at the IMT trial Höttl and Wisliceny had transferred all responsibility to Eichmann, who by that time was nowhere to be found. Eichmann, for his part, later shifted the blame to Heydrich, the former head of the RSHA, who allegedly informed him of the extermination of the Jews, in which he was compelled to take part. In all trials of this kind, one encounters the same defence tactic in regard to the allegations of the prosecution, which anyone caught in the machinery of such show trials must find hopeless, and under certain circumstances even fatal, to oppose, given the hysterical prejudice of the prosecutors, judges, and even defence attorneys, that dominates such trials. Given this situation, a possibility of coming away somewhat unscathed existed only if the extermination of the Jews was not disputed, and the conceptions of judges and prosecutors accepted as part of the basis of one's own defence. That is how Eichmann proceeded —and, considering his position, who could hold it against him?

During the Eichmann trial, the general public was also introduced to a witness to whom the greatest importance would be ascribed in the future, because the accounts attributed to him included very detailed claims about the extermination facilities at Auschwitz-Birkenau. I am referring to the previously mentioned Miklos Nyiszli, who, strange to say, could not —as Rassinier's inquiries revealed— have been alive at the time his personal narrative first appeared, in France at the beginning of the 1950's. It is possible that this "eyewitness" never existed.[394] In any case, a report he allegedly composed about Auschwitz appeared in 1961 in Quick, a weekly tabloid published in Munich. Yet this version —as Rassinier, again, discovered— deviates from the earlier

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[392] Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 116; Servatius, *op. cit.*, pp. 52ff.; Nellessen, *op. cit.*, pp. 160ff.; Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

[393] Arendt, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

[394] See Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?*, pp. 242ff., and *Das Drama der Juden Europas*, pp. 69ff. According to Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner (*op. cit.*, p. 395) Nyiszli was Hungarian physician who graduated from the University of Breslau. He was supposed to have been saved from gassing by Dr. Mengele of the SS, for whom he allegedly dissected bodies; he is said to have died in Rumania on an unspecified date after his return there from Auschwitz.

French version on numerous basic points, something that must arouse suspicion.[395] The most pertinent part of this account, which is no longer available in its entirety, was made public again a year later (1962) in two documentary works, namely Gerhard Schoenberner's *Wir haben es gesehen* (We Saw It...)(pp. 248-251) and Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte* (Auschwitz: Witnesses and Reports)(pp. 84-89). The two publications vary from one another on many points, so that at least three different versions of the alleged Nyiszli report are in circulation. Neither of these can be considered an authentic reproduction of the content of the document, and for that reason alone one could properly ignore this "eyewitness." However, that does not seem feasible, since he is so frequently cited in the literature on our topic. Also, in this "eyewitness" we have an excellent example of the quality of the documentation used in this country when Auschwitz is the subject under discussion.

Now of course one could hold that the discrepancies between the two versions of the report under consideration are the result of inaccurate [156] translations made by different translators of the French version. Yet apart from the fact that the original copy —if there ever was one— may be presumed lost, the following comparison of the German versions should be sufficient to show that the discrepancies in them cannot be traced back to more or less free translation, but must be original creations.

For example, the version published in Schoenberner's book speaks of "fifteen ovens... recessed in a red brick wall" (*op. cit.*, p. 248), while that in Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's volume states that the "fifteen ovens were veneered with red brick" (*op. cit.*, p. 84). In the one case, the entire wall is of red brick, and in the other, the cremation ovens are only "veneered" with red brick, which is obviously something quite different.

In Schoenberner's version, "ten or twelve concrete steps leading down to a large underground room" are described (*op. cit.*, p. 249). As Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner have it, the victims "go down ten or fifteen concrete steps to a large underground hall with a capacity of three thousand people" (*op. cit.*, p. 85). The first Nyiszli not only counted fewer steps, which in itself would not be too suspicious, but he also made no mention of the capacity of the underground room, which suggests that his "alter ego" had no idea of it.

But even greater differences are to be found. In Schoenberner's version, the interior of the rooms in question is described thus:

> The room into which those arriving are brought is about two hundred meters long, whitewashed, and glaringly illuminated. In the middle of the room is a row of pillars. Around the pillars and along the walls are benches above which are numbered clothes hooks (*op. cit.*, p. 249).

In Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's book, the corresponding passage reads as follows:

> In the approximately two-hundred-meter long and glaringly illuminated room are at least a dozen rows of benches. Above the benches are hooks, each of which bears a number (*op. cit.*, p. 85).

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[395] 129 *Drama der Juden Europas*, p. 64ff.; *Was nun, Odysseus?*, p. 79; *Was ist Wahrheit?*, pp. 88f., 242ff.

The French version of the report was published in 1951 in the periodical *Les Temps Modernes*, after Nyiszh's experiences had allegedly already been published in Romania and Hungary in 1946 and 1947 (Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 396). The magazine *Quick* published the report in serial form starting January 15, 1961 (Rassinier, *Was ist Wahrheit?*, p. 243).

The differences are obvious. In the second version, the pillars are missing; instead, the approximate number of the rows of benches is mentioned, which, of course, seems far too few to seat the three thousand people for which the room was designed. Both versions are in agreement about the length of the room, while, strange to say, nothing is said about its width. If one considers that each of the 3,000 victims would need a clothes hook and that the long side of the room could, according to the dimensions given, provide space for 800 to 1,000 hooks at the most, one comes to the notable conclusion that the room would have to have been twice as long as stated. This estimate is obviously nonsense, since it flies in the face of logic. Moreover, the foundations of the [157] alleged disrobing rooms of the crematoria II and III which are exhibited in Birkenau today —they are the only ones of which there are still remains to be seen— have an estimated length of from 25 to 30 meters and a width of from 4 to 5 meters. That comes to a maximum of 150 square meters each. Such a room could have had a capacity of 600 people, if one calculates four people to every square meter, which obviously would still be too crowded for a disrobing room. Any further commentary would be superflous.

After the "gassing" of a total of 3,000 people in an adjacent underground room, the corpses were, according to both versions, loaded on "four large freight elevators" each of which had a capacity of "twenty to twenty-five corpses" and raised to the level of the cremation hall. There, according to the Schoenberner version (*op. cit.*, p. 252), the corpses were delivered to the front of the ovens "on specially built slides" or, according to the Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner version (*op. cit.*, p. 88), "slid" to the ovens "on a specially constructed chute that ran along the length of the concrete floor." The blood flowing from the noses, mouths, and wounds of the corpses "mixed with running water in the gutters built into the concrete floor" (Schoenberner, *op. cit.,* p. 252). No mention is made of these gutters in the Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner version; according to it, the blood of the victims mingled "with the water dripping from the faucets" (*op. cit.*, p. 88). What kind of "faucets" they were is left to the imagination of the reader.

We shall let the matter rest with this brief look at an "eyewitness" report, to which great weight is often assigned. It was intended to give some hint of how different "documentary" accounts can be, even when they allegedly originate with the same author. Here one can rightly speak of "documentations of lies!"[396] In this connection, it might be advisable to give a brief survey of one of the two documentary publications we have just considered, since it is devoted exclusively to the Auschwitz complex, namely, the book *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*, published in 1962. It was edited by H.G. Adler, Hermann Langbein, and Ella Lingens-Reiner, who had all been interned at Auschwitz and occupied a privileged position there. In putting together this book, the major role was probably played by Langbein, the so-called General Secretary of a so-called Auschwitz Committee based in Vienna. This book represents a cross-section, as it were, of all the reports and documents pertaining exclusively to Auschwitz that were extant at the time. To be sure, the

[396] Emil Aretz, who had the *Quick* article at his disposal, has dealt systematically with its contradictions and impossibilities in the journal *Der Quell* (Issue 9/1961, pp. 411ff.), under the title "Das fragwürdige Auschwitz" [The Questionable Auschwitz] comparing them in particular with the alleged writings of Rudolf Höss in Cracow.

more improbable accounts, with several of which we have already become acquainted, were not included. Nevertheless, what is presented is —as the discussion of the Nyiszli report shows— still questionable enough.

The editors praise their work in a prefatory note as the "first comprehensive, complete account" of the Auschwitz complex. They demonstrated its necessity with several characteristic statements which [158] confirm the fact that very little was known about Auschwitz until the end of the 1950's, and that until then the concentratrion camp played a quite subordinate role in the six-million legend. The reasons for that have already been given in various passages of the present work. This is naturally a taboo subject for the editors, who, however, cannot deny the facts of the matter. They write (*op. cit.*, p. 5):

> More is being spoken and written in recent times about Auschwitz. Almost all the books on this subject in the German language —there are only a few— were sold out long ago. Those published in foreign languages are seldom translated.

]For this reason —it is further stated— the editors undertook to "publish a book including the reports of survivors and some supplementary" documents, so that at least a certain overview of all aspects of this concentration camp would be available."

A large number of reports were, by the way, composed especially for this book —fifteen years after the end of the Second World War!

The picture of Auschwitz which thereafter passed for valid was sum marized by the editors in their introduction. This was undoubtedly intended to put the reader in such a mood that he would not become aware of the contradictions that exist even in this selective collection of reports. Moreover, the source value of the book is characterized by the fact that the editors admit to having "tacitly expunged insignificant errors" (*op. cit.*, p. 14). What is "insignificant" was, of course, determined by them alone. They obviously were not successful in removing all of the contradictions. That becomes especially clear in the case of the Höss, Nyiszli, and Vrba/Wetzler reports on crematoria and gas chambers at Birkenau, which exhibit irreconcilable contradictions. Owing to the fact that these reports are not arranged in consecutive order, but are separated from one another by other reports, the average reader is unaware of being deceptively drawn away from these contradictions. Outside of these three reports, the reader will find in this book no details about "extermination facilities;" even in the section entitled "Gas Chambers and Crematoria" (*op. cit.*, pp. 67-110) the reader is basically fed only generalities.

Thus most of the accounts contained in this book have little substance, and all too frequently give evidence that rumour is the source of their "revelations." In the light of what we've already learned, it is probably unnecessary to point out that nothing is proved by the accounts of the individual authors, or even by the pictures and documents reproduced in the appendix to the book, despite the assurances given at the outset by the editors (*op. cit.*, p. 14).[397] What is most noticeable about the accounts is their unusually

[397] The like could be said of the work of the "historian" Professor Walter Hofer, *Der Nationalsozialismus-Dokumente 1933-1945*, which has been used as instructional material even in the schools, and is probably still being used. The main theses of the text are not proved by the documents presented in the appendix, which in part are not even authentic - as, for instance, the so-called Gerstein report, although only a critical reader with some insight into the material could perceive this. The use of this book as school literature thus seems all the more irresponsible.

colorful mode of description. Many of them read like short stories or selections from a novel, which certainly makes the book much more entertaining for habitual readers of cheap fiction, especially when the tales become "gruesome." The Odysseus [159] complex, which we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, seems to have been the godfather to this whole book. In view of their wealth of fantasy, it certainly appears that most of the authors of the reports did not take the truth very seriously.

In summary, it might be said that only two things become clear from the entire book. First, that there clearly exist only very few reports from alleged eyewitnesses as to the technical operation of the daily extermination of thousands of Jews, which is the keystone of the Auschwitz legend. We have established that that was earlier the case, and at the beginning of the 1960's — as this book documents— things were no different. Second, the content of the book demonstrates to the critical reader that all reports including details about the so-called extermination facilities contain not only grave contradictions, but very often pure nonsense as well, that serves to remove all doubt as to their incredibility.

For want of space, only one example of the latter will be given, namely the tale of a certain Jehuda Bacon, entitled "Mit der Neugier von Kindern" ("With the Curiosity of Children") (*op. cit.*, pp. 151-153). This "eyewitness" who claims to have been part of a "pushcart detail" at the age of 14 in Auschwitz-Birkenau, along with others in his age group, relates the following in all seriousness:

> We brought blankets and laundry, but especially wood from the crematorium, which would otherwise have been used for cremation, to heat our part of the camp (*op. cit.*, p. 152).

So now we finally know why the Birkenau crematoria were capable of cremating thousands of corpses in such a fabulously short time. The SS used an entirely new and extremely high-energy source of fuel: wood! Here at last, all doubt has been removed about what fuel was actually used to operate the crematoria, and why all the reports speak in great detail about the many daily transport trains, which allegedly brought millions of Jews to Auschwitz for extermination, but say nothing about the equally high number of transport trains require to supply this fuel. The firewood used for firing the crematoria ovens must, according to Bacon's report, have been available in good supply right on the spot!

And not only does a wide section of the reading public gullibly swallow such nonsense, but even German judges meekly accept such a witness. For thanks to the fact that Jehuda Bacon —like so many of his race— survived Birkenau, even though, as he writes, upon arrival in the camp "it was a foregone conclusion that we would all be exterminated" (*op. cit.*, p. 151), he could appear in the so-called Auschwitz Trial as a witness on the gas chambers. By the way, on that occasion he claimed he had been assigned to work in crematorium III, while in his report it was crematorium II (*op. cit.*, p. 152).[398]

[398] See Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 187 and Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*; further, Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, p. 113. An extensive report of the testimony of this witness in the Auschwitz trial is found in Inge Deutschkron. *...denn ihrer war die Hölle!*, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-66. Other wondrous things are to be learned from his testimony. Thus, for example, the crematorium —not the gas chamber— was situated "underground" (*op. cit.*, p. 63) and the "Zyklon B" was poured through an opening in the roof of the gas chamber into two "cages" of approximately 40 square

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Almost all of the remaining authors of the reports in this documentary collection were later witnesses in the Auschwitz Trial. Some were allowed to broadcast their testimony over the radio before the trial began. In this way, an important part of the hearing of witnesses could be "co-ordinated" as it were, in advance. The co-ordination was certainly not successful in every respect. Its actual purpose, to lay the psychological groundwork for the Auschwitz Trial in co-operation with the mass media, was, however, to a great extent achieved.

Let us now turn to an important informant who was not only given space in the collection of reports we have just discussed, that edited by Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner, but who also published in 1964, during the Auschwitz Trial, his own book concerning his experiences as a concentration camp inmate, co-authored by a British journalist. This is the Slovakian Jew Dr. Rudolf Vrba, now living in England, whose *I Cannot Forgive* (see page 95 above) we intend to consider briefly before we compare its details, so important to the legend, with his earlier statements in the WRB Report and the statements of other "eyewitnesses." Leaving aside the contradictions that would be uncovered by such a comparison, his book in itself contains so many absurdities, impossibilities, and contradictions of well-known facts that it pays to take a look at it, so as to be able to judge properly this "eyewitness" in every respect. Even in outward form, his book is purely a fairy tale, a collection of very exciting accounts, told mostly in dialogue form, of his experiences from the time of his arrest in Slovakia to his alleged escape from Birkenau in April of 1944, which he claims to have accomplished with a fellow prisoner, who later allegedly co-authored his account in the WRB Report. Alan Bestic, his collabourator on the book, was probably responsible for its novelistic form. Be that as it may, scarcely a single one of the experiences that were communicated to the world in the book —about a decade and a half after they purportedly occurred— is so much as hinted at in the WRB Report account ascribed to Vrba.

In the foreword to the book, Alan Bestic finds words of praise for his co-author and "hero" Vrba, of whom he writes:

> He collabourated intensively and patiently with me. I should like to express my special appreciation of infinite care he expended on every detail; of his almost fanatical concern for accuracy; and for the courage this cold-blooded examination of those two dreadful years demanded (*op. cit.*, p. 8).

Let us take a look at some of the details on the accuracy of which Vrba allegedly expended such effort.

In the very first chapter, Vrba reports, for example, in great detail about a visit to Birkenau by Himmler, which allegedly took place in January of 1943 (*op. cit.*, pp. 16-17). In point of fact, the last time Himmler visited Auschwitz-Birkenau was on July 17, 1942.[399]

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centimetres. The witness tells later that the dead were transported "to the first story by elevator" from where they were taken by wagons on tracks to the ovens." Was the crematorium, then, not located underground after all?

If Bacon really testified in the way described by Inge Deutschkron, then one must doubt the reason of the judges who believed this witness, or in any case listened patiently to his nonsense.

[399] The German publisher remarks in a footnote (footnote 1 to p. 16, *Op. cit.*): "Himmler's visit to the Auschwitz camp in January 1943 is not substantiated in the rest of the literature. It is certain that Himmler visited Auschwitz twice. The first visit took place on March 1, 1941; the second, and probably last, on July 17-18, 1942. Vrba's account begins with the description of this visit. According to Höss's *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, Himmler occasionally sent "high party and SS

During this alleged visit in January 1943, Himmler was supposedly present at the gassing and cremation of 3,000 Polish Jews "in the new crematorium." But according to all sources, the first crematorium in Birkenau was not completed until the end of March 1943.[400] In another passage, Vrba explains that, in the course of the month of December, 1942, he was transferred from Auschwitz to Birkenau (*op. cit.*, pp. 191-195). At that time, on the march to Birkenau, he claims to have seen "yellow flames" mounting above the chimney of the crematorium (*op. cit.*, p. 195). On the other hand, he claims to have worked on the construction of the crematorium "as a slave" (*op. cit.*, p. 17). Undoubtedly, Vrba's fanatical concern for accuracy reaches a pinnacle when he states that within a period of three years 2[1/2] million people were gassed and cremated in the gas chambers and crematoria of Birkenau (*op. cit.*, p. 16). That would mean that the crematoria were in operation until January 1946, if the first one had been inaugurated by Himmler in January of 1943 (Vrba, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17). Otherwise, the first crematorium would have to have been completed in the autumn of 1941, since Himmler allegedly ordered the extermination of the Jews to stop in the autumn of 1944 (see p. 23 above). Moreover, Vrba, according to the affidavit he prepared for the Eichmann tribunal in Jerusalem (*op. cit.*, pp. 310-313), sees confirmation of the correctness of his estimate of 2,5 million deaths by gassing in the fact that Höss also estimated this number of deaths, so that both, "each independent of the other" arrived at the same conclusion. Presumably, his accuracy consisted essentially in copying Höss' Nuremberg affidavit exactly, at least on this point!

Vrba mentions several times —contrary to known fact— that Höss was still commandant of Auschwitz in 1944 (*op. cit.*, pp. 227 and 255). Actually, Höss was transferred to Berlin in November of 1943.[401] Also, Vrba does not know how to describe correctly the subdivisions of the Birkenau camp, although he claims to have lived there for more than a year. He describes the men's camp as Camp A, and the so-called Theresienstadt Camp (Family Camp) as Camp B; the two camps were supposedly separated by a fence (*op. cit.*, p. 206). According to Smolen, these were actually Camps B II b and B II d, between which, however, the Hungarian Camp was located (see the groundplan in Smolen's book, third foldout). The men's camp (B II d) was separated from the Hungarian Camp by a street. Everything Vrba relates about a meeting he had with a girl from the Theresienstadt Camp at the camp fence is obviously pure fantasy, since the men's camp and the Theresienstadt Camp did not border on each other.

Vrba does not seem to know even the exact location of the crematoria, since he reports that one day trucks entered the camp to carry away inmates of the Theresienstadt camp for "gassing" (*op. cit.*, p. 222). According to Smolen's

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leaders to Auschwitz so that they could watch the extermination of Jews." Thus, it is possible that the visit of some other high-ranking SS leader is described here. All this is rather strained, because Vrba himself writes that he recognized Himmler from his former visits, since Himmler had stood only a short distance in front of him. Besides, according to Vrba's story the occasion was the dedication of the first new crematorium, which Himmler was expected to attend. Wouldn't explaining that Vrba's entire story of Himmler's alleged presence at the dedication of the new crematorium was a lie be more enlightening?

[400] See also pp. 47ff.

[401] See Broszat in footnote 2 to p. 130 of the Höss memoirs, *op. cit.*, and Kaul, *op. cit.*, p. 332. See also footnote 78 to this chapter.

groundplan, the crematoria with their gas [162] chambers were located near this camp; one could easily get there on foot.[402] On the other hand, according to his own statements, Vrba worked, from August 1942, on the so-called Canada detail, which was stationed right beside crematoria III and IV. That again is in direct contradiction to Vrba's claim that he worked on the construction of the first crematorium "as a slave" since the Canada detail was, as is well known, only in charge of the prisoners' clothing.

These are only a few of the contradictions and absurdities which can be found all through the book and which do not speak for the author's "accuracy." The reader should be given a sample of the novelistic style of description with which the author himself carries his picture of Auschwitz *ad absurdum*.

Vrba could —as he reports— without difficulty make contact with the women who were housed in the adjacent camp, and he became especially attracted to a beautiful young girl. This contact resulted in the following idyll one evening in his room —he evidently occupied a single room because he was an inmate functionary (*op. cit.*, p. 215):

> "Rudi" she said softly, "look at me."
>
> Slowly, I turned around and looked at her. She was crouching on the bed, and I believe that I have never seen anything more beautiful. Her dark brown hair fell down over her shoulders. Her eyes were misty, but still she smiled, and her mouth was a soft provocation. She reclined completely, and the delicate shape of her breasts was outlined lightly under her pale blue blouse.
>
> My inhibitions, all inhibitions vanished. I bent over her, so close to her that her scent enveloped me, and this time all embarrassment had disappeared.
>
> "You smell so nice" I whispered, foolishly and confused. "Why do you smell so nice?"
>
> She giggled. It was a quite breathless, soft laughter. "Soap, my dearest" she murmured. "Nothing more than soap. But why do you talk so much?"

Enough of this excerpt. Naturally, we know that "Rudi" (the author, Vrba) will eventually get down to business. And so he did. It all came to pass in his room, where the two lovers were awakened late next morning by another female inmate. Many a solider at the front, or munitions worker in one of the many German cities that each night found themselves under a shower of bombs from Allied terror bombers, would gladly have traded places with the Auschwitz inmate Vrba! Of course, this story is probably just fiction. At any rate, no passage in the book reveals more drastically that this man Vrba is nothing but a notorious liar, of whom one can believe nothing, absolutely nothing. By the way, his obvious erotic bent found expression earlier when he related how he, with 79 others, was transported in a cattle car to the Maidanek camp (*op. cit.*, p. 53). Although the 80 people had luggage with them, there still was enough space that a "newly married couple" could be provided with a "special sleeping place" for their wedding night. "A certain measure of privacy" was assured them —at least that is what Vrba [163] claims! The smutty imaginings of the author are surpassed here only by his brazen lying. 80 people with luggage could scarcely find enough room in a box car, even if they stood crowded closely together.

This Dr. Vrba, who —as Butz informs us[403]— previously went under the name of Rosenberg or Rosenthal, became well known not only through the book

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[402] Vrba, on the other hand, himself speaks about the fact that the crematorium —he speaks of only one here!— could be seen from the Theresienstadt camp (*op. cit.*, pp. 209, 211). He also says that the camp "kindergarten" was located "in the shadow of the crematorium" (*op. cit.*, p. 222). Clearly he's become entangled in his own web of lies!

[403] Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

that has just been discussed, but also because he was one of the authors of the WRB Report. He also appeared as a witness at the so-called Auschwitz Trial, where the presiding judge of the assize court praised him, in particular, for his good memory. In its judicial opinion, the court attested to the fact that he had made an "excellent and intelligent impression" (page 118 of the judicial opinion). Well, at least he was more intelligent than the judges in this trial, whom he obviously succeeded in deceiving. That his intelligene was not always coupled with concern for the truth should be evident to anyone who has read his book or part of the WRB Report attributed to him. The judges in the Auschwitz Trial apparently did not read either of them.

By the way, at the time of his testimony, the witness who was allegedly co-author of Vrba's account in the WRB Report (see page 94 above) presented the court a document, written in English, which he claimed agreed with a 60-page "record" he and Vrba allegedly wrote together after their escape from Auschwitz-Birkenau.[404] I cannot determine the contents of this document, which is not mentioned in any of the other literature on our subject, or whether it agrees with the part of the WRB Report attributed to Vrba and Wetzler. Adler, Langbein, and LingensReiner likewise mention a "very exhaustive report" which Vrba and Wetzler composed after their escape and gave to the Papal Nuncio "at a five-hour meeting." Not long afterwards, the report "reached" Jewish organizations in Switzerland, which passed it on.[405] This again does not agree completely with the statements Wetzler made as a witness. He stated that a Rabbi Weissmandel had smuggled their "record" to Budapest, whence it was was sent all over the world —for example, to the Pope, to the American president, and to the Swedish king. Wetzler, as well as his colleague Vrba, mentioned nothing about the WRB Report in his testimony. Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner explain, with striking reserve (*op. cit.*, p. 407), "In November 1944, the report was *allegedly* (emphasis added by the author) published in English by the War Refugee Board."

That all seems, as Butz has indicated in his discussion of the WRB Report, very confused and unclear.[406] Why neither the 60-page "record" the English translation of which Wetzler handed over to the court, nor the WRB Report became an issue in the Auschwitz Trial can only be surmised. In the copy of the WRB Report I have before me, the Vrba-Wetzler account occupies a total of only 33 pages, including tables and maps (four pages).

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At the Auschwitz Trial —which played a role equally important to that of the Jerusalem Eichmann trial in "securing" the Auschwitz legend and in accomplishing the intended purpose of elevating it to the rank of a historical fact— another "documentary report" surfaced, one that could not just be swept

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[404] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 193; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 122f., 125.

[405] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 407. Here it is indicated that this report was presented at the NMT Wilhelmstrasse Trial as Document NG-2061, and published in Silberscheins collection of reports, *Judenausrottung in Polen* [Extermination of Jews in Poland].

See on this Reitlinger's statements, which differ somewhat (Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 622).

[406] Butz points out that Vrba-Wetzler were only advanced as the authors of the WRB Reports main section due to Reitlinger's attempts to discover the identities of the anonymous authors. He believes that the entire WRB Report was the creation of American-Jewish organizations.

Butz has also demonstrated that the details of Vrba's escape from Auschwitz-Birkenau are not true, which alone should be sufficient to place Vrbas credibility in question. See Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-99.

under the judicial rug since it was evidently introduced into the trial by official representatives of the Polish Government. The person from whose hand it allegedly originated, the former SS man Broad (see page 189 above), was also sitting in the dock. He himself was the one most surprised that this report, with which he had once purchased his freedom from the British, had now been, after so many years of silence, brought to public attention and used against him. Presumably, he could by this time hardly remember the contents of what he had once written. Still, it is not certain that the typewritten manuscript which was introduced into the trial was identical in content with the original written by Broad, which was not submitted to the court. Broad himself did not express an opinion on the matter. In any case, a witness by the name of Winter was, of course, immediately available with a copy of this "document" and confirmed to the court that the copy submitted to it corresponded to the original. He explained to the court that he had belonged to the English military unit for which Broad, shortly after the war, had voluntarily composed his handwritten report on Auschwitz. He, Winter, had copied this report word for word with a typewriter. No additions or deletions were made by him. The copy submitted to the court was "a true copy of the original." The witness Winter's former superior, van het Kaar, who likewise was interrogated as a witness, corroborated that.

Both witnesses —according to the judicial opinion— made an"excellent and credible impression" on the court, especially the witness Winter, because he "testified clearly, succinctly, and precisely." In its judicial opinion, the court stated in conclusion: "Hence there is no doubt that the copy read into the record corresponds to the handwritten original."[407]

Faced with this type of argumentation, a jurist can only shake his head! The court was merely presented, in what purported to be a "document" with an uncertified and in no way authenticated typewritten manuscript that was admittedly only a copy of an original that no longer existed. The whereabouts of the original was clearly of interest to no one, except perhaps the defendant Broad. Thereafter two witnesses —presumably German-speaking Jews of the type let loose at one time on German prisoners of war in order to "effect" incriminating statements from them, in one way or another— confirmed, after more than 15 years, "clearly, succinctly, and precisely "that this comprehensive typewritten manuscript agreed in all its particulars with the handwritten report that had been given to them by the defendant Broad. Whether they read the entire manuscript in advance cannot be gathered from the [165] judicial opinion, but it is improbable, since that would have required a comparatively long period of time. Even if that had been the case, however, a minimum of healthy common sense would indicate that after so many years the witnesses could hardly have remembered the com plete contents of the original report. At most, they might still have some notion that the report contained negative statements about Auschwitz. They were not actually in a position to make the desired confirmation of authenticity. After more than a decade, it would have been beyond the powers of the human memory to determine whether the copy and the original corresponded in content, let alone wording. Not even Jewish witnesses, from whom we have become accustomed to expect all kinds of marvels, could have such superbrains. The court, however, had no doubt —on

[407] Pp. 88f. of the Opinion.

the basis of this witness testimony— that the copy submitted to it accorded with the lost handwritten original!

But what were the defendant Broad's view on the matter? Whatever the conclusions of these witnesses, he was, after all, the sole author of the original document, of which an alleged transcript had been submitted to the court. Naturally he could not deny that he had composed a report on Auschwitz during his imprisonment, which at that time procured his freedom and later protected him from further persecution.[408] Yet he dissociated himself from its content, so far as he thought it possible. To dispute the general content was out of the question, since, as a defendant, he could not afford to antagonize the court and the prosecution with any unnecessary recalcitrance and thereby forfeit the prospect of a light sentence or even an acquittal.[409] Thus he exercised extreme caution in taking a position on the matter. In Bernd Naumann's book (*op. cit.*, p. 142), one reads: "After some hesitation Broad admits that he is the sole author of this report, but he says that he cannot stand by everything in it because some of the things he wrote were based on hearsay."

It can no longer be determined whether the presiding judge then asked him which were the parts by which he could not stand. Even the judicial opinion is not clear on this point. It does not even taken note of Broad's reservations. His report jibed so nicely with a whole series of witness testimonies and with the general picture of Auschwitz that the court doubtless *had* to use as its point of departure, lest judges create certain problems for themselves. So the court probably neglected to check the details, and just had the entire report read into the record, whereby it acquired "probative value" in these proceedings. And that was all that really mattered!

The minimal extent to which Broad identified himself with the details of the report ascribed to him becomes clear from the foreword Jerzy Rawicz contributed to the first edition of the Broad Report, which was published as a brochure by the "Auschwitz Museum" after the completion of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. In this foreword, Rawicz makes [166] the following statements, *inter alia* (*op. cit.*, pp. V-VI):

> Broad, in this document, spares no words of sharp condemnation for the criminal actions of the SS in the murder of human beings... During the trial, Broad no longer condemns the crimes of the SS; instead, he shows his solidarity with the rest of the defendants, who deny the crimes, avoid remembering them, and express no remorse... Yet, when confronted with a direct question by the presiding judge, and when driven into a corner by the prosecution, Broad could not deny his authorship of the document.

One must therefore proceed on the premise that the content of the actual original of the Broad Report —the manuscript— can no longer be determined. Whether or not the picture of the Auschwitz Broad committed to

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[408] As established in the Auschwitz judgement, Broad also helped the English in the investigation of persons who had worked at Auschwitz as well as "war criminals" in general (page 325 of the Opinion). His was not the only ease of this sort of cooperation with his country's enemy, for more prominent "Germans" acted similarly, in order to save their own skins. Butz mentions, as an example, the cases of Eberhard von Thadden and Horst Wagner, who both dealt with the Jewish question as senior officials of the foreign ministry (see Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 158f.). Such collabouration, however, did not always end in the desired result, as is shown by the examples of Höss and Pohl. Certain friendly witnesses and other "helpers" of the Allies vanished forever after they had rendered their services, thereby sparing the Allies any surprises later.

[409] Broad was finally sentenced to 4 years in prison; two and a half years of detention on remand were counted toward his sentence. See Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 272. On Broad's defence in the trial, see also Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 537ff.

writing back then is in accord with reality cannot and need not be investigated any further under these circumstances. Thus no historian can properly use the "Broad Report" as source material. The brochure circulated by the "Auschwitz Museum" under that title might be in agreement with the alleged copy of the so-called Broad Report used in the Auschwitz Trial, but it must, upon closer scrutiny, be designated a forgery, or, at least, a falsification of the authentic report. This is supported by the fact that the details related therein, some of which are horrifying, would certainly have resulted in Broad's extradition to Poland had they appeared in the original. To be sure, nowhere in the document is it mentioned that Broad participated in the crimes he describes, but the manner in which he relates them contains circumstantial evidence of that, and, what is more, Broad was admittedly a member of the political department at Auschwitz.

Aside from that, one finds further indications of forgery in the alleged Broad Report. Above all, the vocabulary of this report gives the impression that it does not stem from a former SS man. Even an SS man who wanted to dissociate himself from his former comrades undoubtedly would not have used the word "Germans" in referring to his compatriots and the words "patriots" and "martyrs" in referring to Poles condemned to death, as is done in this report (*op. cit.*, pp. 13-16). Also, he would hardly have described his former comrades as "vertierte SS-Bestien" ("primitive SS brutes"), which is the phrase put in Broad's mouth (*op. cit.*, p. 36). This and similar expressions in the alleged Broad Report unmistakably suggest that the real authors were Polish, or of alien race. The very poor German which occurs in parts of the report also supports this view. Words are used which do not exist in the German vocabulary; for example, "Erfindungsheit" and "Brandmark" (*op. cit.*, pp. 31 and 71). "Erfindungsgeist" (inventiveness) and "Brandmal" (stigma) are evidently the words that were meant. This is not a matter of typographical errors, since these words reappear in the collection of documents entitled *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS* (Auschwitz in the Eyes of the SS), published in 1973 by the "Auschwitz Museum" which also contains the [167] alleged Broad Report (*op. cit.*, pp. 161 and 188). Since Broad, who is described as "intelligent" not only enjoyed a good primary education, but also attended the Technical College in Berlin until 1941,[410] it is most unlikely that he would have made linguistic slips of this and other kinds.

Another fact indicating forgery is that the report is written in various styles, which suggests that there were various authors. Some parts are in a more or less skillful reportorial style, while others are in the narrative style, in which even direct discourse is not lacking. This difference is so conspicuous that one is amazed at the audacity with which authorship of this report is ascribed to a single person. In fact, it is probable that numerous passages from the standard Polish atrocity literature have been incorporated into it.

Finally, there are things mentioned in the report that the alleged author, Broad, could neither have experienced himself nor heard from others. In the description of an escape, on page 46, it is reported that the prisoners "disappeared into an adjacent forest" under cover of heavy smoke from a funeral pyre on which corpses were being burned, and that their disappearance was not noticed until two hours later (*op. cit.*, p. 46). Since the prisoners —as is

[410] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 23; Rawicz in the preface to the Broad Report, pp. viiif.

further reported— could not be recaptured, the question arises as to where the alleged author might have obtained his knowledge of these details. He also reports things about the "resistance movement" in the camp which could not have been known to the SS without their putting to an end to the movement. At the conclusion of his tale, the forger really outdoes himself in his account of the end of Auschwitz. Among other things, he writes (*op. cit.*, p. 88):

> Somewhere amid the ruins there was a dented tin bowl from which some prisoner had probably eaten his watery soup. A crudely drawn picture of a boat dancing on top of waves was scratched into it. Over this was written [in English] "Don't forget the forlorn man." On the other side was a picture of a plane with an American star on its wings about to drop a bomb. It was entitled "Vox Dei."

The peculiar German of the last sentence:("Die Beschreibung des Bildes hiess: Vox Dei!") again points to a non-German author, for the appropriate expression here would be "Beschriftung" not "Beschreibung." Apart from this, one must ask where Broad learned of this "find" which, according to the report, could not have been made until the evacuation of Auschwitz.

Under the given circumstances, it seems useless to concern ourselves with further details of the alleged Broad Report, even though it is sometimes represented as an important historical source. The claims contained therein about the alleged extermination of the Jews will be discussed further in connection with the other eyewitness reports. The statements in the Broad Report that pertain to this matter are naturally just as important to our topic as those of the other "eyewitnesses" we encounter in the standard works on this subject.

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Except for the so-called Broad Report, the Auschwitz Trial had scarcely produced any new testimony on Auschwitz when, on August 19, 1965, it came to an end with the reading of the verdict. The witnesses, the majority of whom came from Israel and the Eastern Bloc countries, confirmed —not entirely without contradiction— the picture of Auschwitz painted by the literature and the mass media, though they were, in general, so conspicuously reticent about the procedure by which the mass gassings were allegedly carried out in Birkenau that even Hermann Langbein could not escape the conclusion that "eyewitnesses today can testify only to very little of what took place in and around these large buildings at the Auschwitz camp."[411]

He means the Birkenau crematoria, the very number of which is in dispute today, as is well known.

Despite the fact that the findings of the Auschwitz Trial were basically without substance for the study of recent history, the trial brought a decisive breakthrough for the Auschwitz myth.[412] Now a German court had "established" in proceedings that lasted almost two years, what had previously been widely

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[411] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 88.

[412] An example of the capitulation even in the "national camp" can be found in the book, *Hier stehe ich...*, which was published in 1975 by the vaunted publishing house of Druffel. There the substance of the Auschwitz legend is presented as fact, with doubts expressed merely as to the number of "murdered Jews." The book consists chiefly of the memoirs of Helmut Sündermann, the co-proprietor of Druffel, who died in 1972. Sündermann, who wrote the memoirs during the years immediately following the war while in a Nuremberg prison, is also said to have written the chapter in question, "Das Geheimnis der Endlösung" [The Secret of the Final Solution]. Sündermann never supported the Auschwitz legend during his lifetime. Significantly, his diaries, published in 1965, *Deutsche Notizen 1945-1965* [German Notes 1945/1965], contain no passage comparable to or confirmatory of the treatment of Auschwitz in *Hier stehe ich...*

regarded as merely an assertion made in books, newspaper articles, and radio and television broadcasts. This fact alone must have been sufficient for the average German citizen, who, by temperament, tends to trust in authority, and who neither knew nor could have guessed the illegitimate aspects of the conduct of this trial, which existed from the very start. But this problem will be examined separately in the following chapter. The literature on the Auschwitz Trial (Langbein, Naumann, and Laternser) will be considered, and some additional conclusions drawn.

In the years which followed, few new personal narratives concerning Auschwitz surfaced. Hermann Langbein's book *Menschen in Auschwitz*, published in 1972, is nothing more than a rehash of the same old accounts, which the author has arranged systematically and interlarded with some of his own experiences. These are hardly worth discussing, since Langbein, who was the secretary to the SS garrison surgeon, provides no personal insights regarding conditions at Birkenau of interest to us. That does not, however, prevent him from passing on rumours as truth. Naturally, he relies primarily on Höss, Broad, Nyiszli, and Vrba as his "sources", but, strange to say, fails to mention the WRB Report, even in his list of unpublished sources at the end of the book (*op. cit.*, pp. 593-595).

Two things are surprising about Langbein's book *Menschen in Auschwitz*. First, he comments on something that until then had been studiously ignored in the literature on Auschwitz. He writes (*op. cit.*, p. 21):

> When the authors are describing occurrences they have not witnessed themselves, mistakes are only to be expected. Inmates were fond of embellishing with rumour anything that was out of the ordinary in the day-to-day life of the camp. Scarcely one of these authors was able to check the veracity of those rumours.

[169]

Evidently, Langbein believed that he could allow himself a certain latitude now that the Auschwitz legend had received its judicial benediction and been given the appearance of an "obvious historical fact" in the Auschwitz Trial. Thus, in his introduction to the book, called "The Author's Justification" he feigns a certain critical aloofness with regard to the alleged events, an aloofness he lacks, or, in any case, one which doesn't prevent him from spreading rumours himself.

Second, in this book Langbein mentions Rassinier, whom the authors of literature on this subject had hitherto tried to bury with silence. Nevertheless, he lists in his bibliography only one of Rassinier's works, *Das Drama der Juden Europas* (The Drama of the European Jews). He remains silent about the rest, although some of them are more important. The way in which Langbein comes to grips with the revisionist scholar is characteristic. He writes (*op. cit.*, p. 24):

> No words need be wasted on publications like those of Paul Rassinier. He has cast doubt on whether gas chambers ever existed at Auschwitz, and attempts to discount the writings of Höss, in which the gassing procedure is described exactly, by saying that they must be deciphered like hieroglyphics. He thus places himself beneath all criticism. Not even accused former members of the SS have attempted to deny the existence of gassing equipment in Auschwitz; the writings of Höss are perfectly legible.

It is noteworthy that the "re-education" literature here at last takes note of Rassinier. Just as noteworthy is the author's criticism of Rassinier's research work; it contains many more arguments than Langbein mentions. Skepticism about the gas chambers is not permissible, and "no words need be wasted" on anybody who expresses it. It is as simple as that!

On the matter of the witnesses in the Auschwitz Trial, Langbein is not only unacceptably general, but fails to take into consideration the motivations of the defendants and the question of the veracity of their testimony. The manuscript which is passed off as that of Höss may have seemed to Rassinier like "hieroglyphics." But how can Langbein be so sure of what the original of the alleged Höss memoirs looked like, if it still exists?

There may be a special reason that Langbein speaks so disparagingly of Rassinier. As secretary to the SS garrison surgeon, Langbein belonged to the so-called camp elite (*op. cit.*, pp. 18-19), which as Rassinier commented in one of his books, "stole food and clothing from us so shamelessly, treated us so cruelly, brutalized and beat us beyond description —and according to statistics were the cause of death of 82% of us..."[413]

As a former concentration camp inmate, Rassinier undoubtedly was in the know, even if the percentage he cites included deaths from other causes, as well as seeming too high. Did the authors of these personal narratives about the concentration camps, who uniformly belonged [170] to the camp elite, have such a poor past record to overcome that they were compelled to spread Zionistic atrocity propaganda in order to divert attention from their own shameful behaviour?

In concluding this survey, let one more report of particular significance be mentioned: the *Buch des Alfred Kantor* (Book of Alfred Kantor). In form and content, it represents a rarity, since it is not a personal narrative in the familiar pattern. Kantor was a prisoner in various concentration camps, including Auschwitz-Birkenau, and after his liberation made drawings, in the Displaced Persons camp at Deggendorf from sketches he had made of his experiences in the individual concentration camps. His book, which appeared in 1972, is essentially a collection of watercolors he produced after the war, which, by the way, can scarcely lay claim to "artistic value." Kantor added a brief commentary explaining the individual pictures.

We are interested only in Kantor's depiction of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The picture of the alleged "extermination camp" which Kantor offers in his book differs conspicuously from other representations. The fact that his sketches were actually made after his liberation in 1945 is telling enough, since —as we know— at that time there existed no fixed image of Auschwitz, the most important accounts of it not surfacing until many years later.

If the date of composition is correct, Kantor's book could, in any case, give some idea of what existed at Birkenau, and what did *not*. But let us turn to the details.

It is most noteworthy that Kantor always drew only a single crematorium (cf. *op. cit.*, pp.53, 54, 56-60, 63, 73). This cannot be the old crematorium in the Auschwitz main camp, since it had a flat roof, while Kantor's crematorium —caption: "World's biggest crematory"— is described as a "long, low factory installation with a window under a roof with a high gable" (*op. cit.*, p. 54 and note thereto). Kantor was, by the way, a Birkenau inmate. In Birkenau, according to the current official ground plans of the camp, there were allegedly four such "death factories" located close together, so that the other three should also have appeared in Kantor's sketches, if they in fact existed. The picture on page 34 (view of the front of the Birkenau camp) is alone in showing

[413] *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, p. 22.

three black pillars of smoke on the horizon, which, according to the heading, represents "Clouds of smoke from the crematoria." Was Kantor attempting to make up here for the three crematoria missing from his other pictures? Perhaps that is what he thought he saw. Yet it could have been smoke from the factory smokestacks of the neighboring industrial plants. Speaking objectively, Kantor could —to judge by all his sketches— have seen only one crematorium.

Naturally, according to Kantor, a "glaring flame" which stood "in stark contrast to the peacefully sleeping work camp" rose from the crematorium chimney (cf. the note to the picture on page 53, also pages [172] 54, 60, and 74). Did it exist only in his imagination? Or did he integrate into his sketches —consciously or unconsciously— rumours he heard later? For this detail is —as has been mentioned several times— an impossibility.

On the matter of the gas chamber —Kantor apparently knows of only one!— and the crematory ovens he also has astonishing things to report. The former were on ground level in the crematorium, while the "equipment for the cremation of 1,000 people in 15 minutes" (*i.e.*, the crematory ovens) was in the cellar of the crematorium building. The gas chamber was allegedly 250 square meters, and had a capacity to "gas up to 2,000 people at one time" (notes to pictures on pages 54-55). Obviously, Kantor is not proficient in mathematics, since in this case eight people would have to have been squeezed into one square meter, which is impossible. Meanwhile, the patent detailing of cremating 1,000 people in 15 minutes has been lost. In a modern crematorium, 1 1/2 to 2 hours are still required today to cremate one corpse.

On page 57, Kantor has captured a strange procedure: Corpses of prisoners who have allegedly been gassed are being taken out the open door of the "gas chamber" and loaded on a truck. Why this, if the cremation facilities were located in the cellar of the same building?

By the way, Kantor survived on parcels he received from his sister, who had "married a Christian" and therefore was permitted to remain in Prague; he received a food parcel once a month (note to the picture on page 70: Receiving a package). There is no reason to doubt this claim, which, however, does not fit in with the usual accounts of Auschwitz.[414] Through a "stroke of good luck" Kantor was able to leave Auschwitz at a time when it "appeared certain" that he would be "gassed" (note to the picture on page 75). Kantor had already prepared us for this rather nonsensical remark when, in the introduction to his book, he stated that his mother as well as his bride, Eva, were gassed in Auschwitz. He did not actually see this himself, however, and did not believe it at first, since he was told that both had been transferred to Heydebreck, which may very well have been the case. Kantor explains that the SS had understood how to "make the extermination of Jews a confusing, secretive, step-by-step operation" so that none of the victims had knowledge of the complete plan of the "Final Solution." This contradicts the commentary, just quoted, to the picture on page 75, according to which Kantor himself, shortly before his own "certain" gassing, was transferred to another camp; this plan thus did not

[414] The International Red Cross confirmed in its documentation of its activity in the German concentration camps that packages could be sent to the camp prisoners from 1943 on (*op. cit.*, pp. 16f.). Packages were sent to prisoners at Auschwitz and "distributed completely," as a delegate of the Red Cross to Auschwitz stated in a report of September 1944 (*op. cit.*, p. 92). See also the author's article *Das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz und die deutschen Konzentrationslager* in *Mensch und Maße*, series 22/1975, pp. 1021ff., 1023.

remain a secret to him. Anybody who looks for logic in such accounts nearly always comes a cropper.

So much for the content of this book, insofar as it relates to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Although Kantor's illustrations, to a great extent, unmistakably bear the influence of other people's ideas, he may have seen everything as he sketched it, except for the flames mounting out of the [172] crematorium chimney. There may actually have been only one crematorium in Birkenau, not four. And it is possible that at some time corpses could have been removed from the crematorium, loaded on trucks, and then cremated outside (picture on page 58) because the mortality rate during one of the many typhus epidemics in the Auschwitz region surpassed the cremation capacity of the crematorium. Under the influence of camp rumours, Kantor may merely have given a different interpretation to the proceeding he observed, and believed that a "gassing" had just taken place inside the crematorium. This would be a classic example of an idea which is totally removed from reality originating under the influence of mass suggestion. Seen from this aspect, Kantor's pictures, which he produced in 1945, might come much closer to representing reality than anything else that was concocted later about Auschwitz-Birkenau. Why this book, which in many respects cannot be harmonized with the official Auschwitz picture of today, was published in Germany in 1972 is a question that must remain open. The reader may be able to answer this question himself.

Now let us turn to those who profess to know exactly what took place inside the Birkenau "death factories." Comparing their descriptions will itself answer the question as to their truthfulness.

The Birkenau "Death Factories" As Portrayed In The Most Important "Eyewitness Accounts"

Preliminary Remarks

Naturally, almost every witness reporting on the alleged extermination of Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau professes to have been an "eyewitness." The great majority of these restrict themselves completely to vague statements which are quite obviously meant to inflate their own basically modest experience. There are many Abbe Renards, each with his Odysseus complex (see p. 144f above), and the unreality of the events the relate is usually quite obvious. Thus a certain Sigismund Bendel, who claims to have belonged to the *Sonderkommando* at Birkenau, reports, for example, on the cremation of gassing victims beside crematorium IV(!):

> Thick, black smoke ascends from the pits. It all happens so quickly and is so unimaginable that I think I am dreaming... An hour later everything is back to normal. The men take the ashes out of the pits and make a pile. Another transport is brought to crematorium IV.[415]

Perhaps Bendel really was dreaming! It is totally impossible to reduce corpses to a little pile of ashes on an open funeral pyre within an hour. Even the uncritical reader must come to the conclusion that Bendel is lying after he

[415] Langbein, *Menschen in Auschwitz*, p. 221. Bendel has yet to explain how he, a member of the Sonderkommando, survived imprisonment at Auschwitz. It is universally maintained in the Auschwitz literature that after a certain time, members of these Kommandos were themselves liquidated: See for example *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 126; Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 395; *Der Quell*, Issue 9/1961, p. 412; Adelsberger, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

reads further in Bendel's account: "The prisoners on the [173] *Sonderkommando* had to take the fat which flowed from the funeral pyre and pour it over the corpses so that they would burn better."

We can safely ignore this and similar "eyewitness accounts" even when they appear in works that purport to be "scholarly." In the following section, we intend to compare only such portrayals as are almost universally accorded special significance, namely those of Nyiszli, Broad, and, particularly, Höss. Further, we want to include in our comparison the accounts in the WRB Report, insofar as they concern the alleged gassings of Jews in Birkenau. The WRB Report is, as has already been repeatedly shown, the basis of the legend. The book by Vrba and Bestic, parts of which have already been considered, cannot be overlooked in this context, since its author, Dr. Vrba, was allegedly the most important informant of the War Refugee Board. In the reports of these "eyewitnesses" we shall also find the most details about the subject of our investigation. It was emphasized earlier that the authorship of all these accounts is questionable. The checking and comparison of their factual content will further underscore their unreliability. It will be demonstrated conclusively that the alleged "eyewitnesses" are no more capable of elevating the Auschwitz legend to the rank of a historical fact than is the completely inadequate documentary "evidence."

To provide a better overview, the beginnings of the alleged extermination of the Jews and its subsequent "perfection" in the newly constructed crematoria will be discussed in and of themselves; a few details concerning both periods will be added. Not a word will be wasted on the so-called "selections" even though Broszat attempted, in his expert witness deposition for the Auschwitz Trial, to give the impression that this procedure existed only at Auschwitz.[416] I doubt whether this expression even existed at that time. Possibly it first appeared when the Auschwitz legend was developed further; Höss, for instance, did not use it when he testified and gave his deposition at Nuremberg. The sorting of transports of prisoners according to their apparent state of health, profession, and other characteristics (*e.g.*, sex, age, *etc.*) upon their arrival in the camp was not practised at Auschwitz alone. Given the importance which the concentration camps increasingly assumed in the war effort, it was a necessity and indeed only natural. In no case does it provide sufficient circumstantial evidence for a planned murder of even part of those "selectees."[417]

In the following, WRB 1 refers to the report by Vrba and Wetzler in Part 1 of the WRB Report (*op. cit.*, I), while the abbreviation WRB 2 designates the report of the alleged Polish major (see p. 123f. above). Whenever Vrba is cited, the reference is to the book he wrote together with Alan Bestic, *Ich kann nicht vergeben*. The Nyiszli quotations are taken from Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's book *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse und Berichte*; they correspond, at least in meaning, to the version of Nyiszli's account in Schoenberner's book *Wir haben es [174] gesehen*. The earlier Nyiszli version could not be considered because it was not available to me. The page numbers of the so-called Broad Report refer to the brochure published by the Auschwitz Museum, *Aussage von Pery Broad, einem SS Mann der politischen Abteilung im KL Auschwitz* (Statement of Pery

[416] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, p. 131.
[417] See on this Butz, *op. cit.*,pp. 110ff.

Broad, an SS Man in the Political Section at Auschwitz), which agrees word for word with the text of the Broad Report in Rawicz's *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, also published by the Auschwitz Museum. In the case of Höss, the various testimonies he gave or that were placed in his mouth will be considered together. That precisely this man, whose alleged or real statements contradict each other on essential points, is vaunted as the most important "key witness" is indicative of the probative value of the testimony of the rest of the "eyewitnesses."

Beginning of the "Gassings" and the First "Extermination Facilities"

In the first of his written depositions that is known to us —the Nuremberg affidavit of April 5, 1946, the first commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss, states the following (*op. cit.*, paragraph 4): "Mass executions by gassing commenced during the summer of 1941 and continued until the fall of 1944."[418]

The date of the beginning of the alleged mass gassings reported by Höss referred at the time only to Auschwitz. For, a little later in the same deposition, Höss stated that he had received the order for this "in June 1941" and that at that time "there were already in the general government three other extermination camps: Belzec, Treblinka and Wolzek"[419] (*op. cit.*, paragraph 6). In the manuscript he allegedly completed in Cracow prison in November 1946, *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz* (The Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Auschwitz), his claims are essentially more indefinite. There it is stated (*Kommandant in Auschwitz* – KiA, P. 155): "I cannot say on what date the extermination of the Jews began. Probably it was in September 1941, but it may not have been until January 1942."

In his alleged autobiography, which he completed in February 1947, in the Cracow prison, his memory served him better: the extermination of the Jews began "in the spring of 1942" (KiA, p. 123).

These contradictions are not resolved by the fact that in another passage of his Cracow memoir Höss explains how his deputy *SS-Hauptsturmführer* Firtzsch, first tested "Cyklon B" on Russian prisoners of war (KiA, pp. 122, 155), since he does not report the date. This gassing allegedly took place in the "detention cells of block 11;"[420] Höss himself, "shortly afterward" allegedly

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[418] IMT XXXIII, 275ff. The document is reproduced in full by Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 101f. A translation —partially inexact— can also be found in Poliakov-Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pp. 127ff.

[419] An extermination camp named Wolzek is not mentioned in the concentration camp literature, so far as I can see.

[420] According to Smolen (*op. cit.*, p. 15) this took place on September 3, 1941. Smolen contradicts himself here, because two paragraphs earlier he reports that the first transport of Soviet prisoners arrived at Auschwitz on October 7, 1941 —more than a month later. Rawicz also gives the date of September 3, 1941 in his footnote 112 to the Höss account (*KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, p. 92). He also provides a thoroughly detailed description of the event, without, however, giving any sources.

A report by one Tadeusz Paczula, which was written especially for the book *Auschwitz-Zeugnisse und Berichte* (Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner) also dates the incident September 1, 1941. On the obscure testimony of this witness at the Auschwitz trial see Bernd Naumann (*op. cit.*, pp. 131-133). Other witnesses were more cautious and did not mention a date, although they confirmed the incident. According to Reitlinger (*op. cit.*, p. 162) this first gassing did not take place until September 15, 1941. See on all this p. 118 above.

participated in a gassing of 900 Russians in the mortuary of the old crematorium in Auschwitz.

There is no mention whatsoever of these gassings of Russians in WRB 1 and 2 or in the accounts of Vrba and Nyiszli. That is understand[175]able in the case of Nyiszli, since he is not supposed to have arrived in Auschwitz until May 1944.[421] Wetzler, however, arrived in Auschwitz in April 1942 (WRB 1, p. 1), Vrba in July 1942 (WRB 1, p. 29; Vrba, p. 88), and the Polish Major as early as March 1942 (WRB 2, p. 1). If these gassings of Russians had actually taken place, they would at least have heard rumours about them. According to Höss, "Russian *politruks*, commissars, and certain political officials" were first brought to the Auschwitz concentration camp for liquidation "in autumn of 1941" (KiA, p. 155), and, at the beginning, were supposedly "shot."

Broad, who —as he declared in his affidavit of October 20, 1947 (*op. cit.*, paragraph 2)— was transferred to Auschwitz on April 8, 1942, reports that in the "summer of 1942"... he "first heard rumours of the murder of Jews by gas in Auschwitz" and also learned, at the same time, that "Russians were being put to death with gas" (*op. cit.*, paragraph 4).[422] In the same passage, he relates that about this time he himself could observe from his office the "gassing" of "about 200 people" in the crematorium, which was located about 100 meters away." Actually, according to his description of the event, he could see only that 200 people —whether they were Jews or Russians Broad does not say —were taken to the courtyard of the crematorium and that SS men wearing gas masks were busying themselves on the roof of crematorium; everything else is obviously supposition.

Thus none of our "eyewitnesses" provides specific information on the beginning of the alleged gassings. WRB 1 and 2 do state the approximate time at which large numbers of Jews arriving at Birkenau in prisoner transports were singled out for "gassing." According to WRB 1, that took place in the course of May 1942 with a transport of about 1,600 French Jews, who, except for 200 young girls and 400 men, were all gassed and cremated in the nearby "Birch Forest" (Birkenwald) (*op. cit.*, p. 10).[423] According to WRB 2, the "extermination campaign" began in "spring 1942;" Polish Jews are named here as the first victims (*op. cit.*, p. 12). The timing agrees with Höss's final Cracow manuscript (see p. 255 above), which possibly was adjusted to agree with the WRB Report; according to Höss, however, the first transport of Jews came from Upper Silesia (KiA, p. 123), that is, from Eastern Upper Silesia (KiA, p. 155), which according to the Polish interpretation was indeed Polish land. WRB 1, however, mentions, in conjunction with the report of the initial mass gassing of French Jews, that previously thousands of Polish Jews had for many months been brought from the various ghettos directly to the "Birch Forest" to be gassed and cremated. According to this, the "extermination facilities" in the Birch Forest must have been in operation at the beginning of the year 1942, or even 1941.

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[421] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, *op. cit.*, p. 395; see also Aretz in *Der Quell*, Issue 9/1961, p. 411.

[422] In the so-called Broad Report one finds only a very vague hint, which gives the impression that Broad himself saw the corpses of the Russians who had been gassed.

[423] In the Vrba-Wetzler Report reproduced by Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner (*op. cit.*, pp. 243ff.) which deviates in many ways from WRB 1, the arrival and gassing of this transport was transferred to june 1941; *op. cit.*, p. 247.

If the claims of our "eyewitnesses" about the beginning of the gassings and their first victims are confusing, then their descriptions of what the first "extermination facilities" looked like are even more contradictory. [176] Practically nothing is in agreement here.

WRB 1 states that a large barracks had been erected in the Birch Forest, and the "selectees" were gassed in it. Beside this barracks was a trench, 15 meters long and several meters deep, in which the dead were cremated (*op. cit.*, pp. 8 and 9).

According to WRB 2, in the Birch Forest were "special gassing barracks" (plural!) which "consisted of large halls, airtight... " There were built-in ventilators which could be opened or closed as necessity dictated. The interiors of the "gassing barracks" were done up like baths, to "deceive the victims and render them more tractable" (*op. cit.*, p. 13).

WRB 2 also describes the disposal of the corpses differently: Until the autumn of 1942, they supposedly were, as a rule, buried in mass graves. The old crematorium in Auschwitz was not used for the cremation of these corpses. Since, however, they had been covered only with a very thin layer of earth, the corpses in the mass graves caused an unbearable stench, for which reason they were exhumed in the autumn of 1942, and cremated in the four crematoria which had been constructed in the meantime. Some of the unfortunate victims, however, were stacked in piles in the open and were cremated by using gasoline as fuel. The enormous amount of ash was scattered in all directions over the fields (*op. cit.*, p.13). Completely different and —as usual— self-contradictory are the claims of Rudolf Höss. His Nuremberg affidavit, which is remarkably muddled, does not mention provisional extermination facilities at all. It gives the impression that the regular extermination facilities with "gas chambers to accommodate 2,000 people at one time" (*op. cit.*, paragraph 7) were built immediately. In another passage of the affidavit, Höss makes reference to the "extermination building at Auschwitz" (*op. cit.*, paragraph 6), and later speaks of only *one* extermination facility. The affidavit thus awakens the impression that there existed in Auschwitz only *one* extermination facility, which, however, had several gas chambers; according to this, provisional gassings in makeshift facilities never occurred in Auschwitz.

As already mentioned (see p. 140 above), Höss, under cross-examination on April 15, 1946,[424] got caught up in a contradiction to the content of his affidavit, which, however, neither side —not even the defence— contested or even recognized. Now he suddenly explained that *before* the construction of the crematoria —Höss left the number open— "provisional facilities" existed, and had been "used initially." According to Höss' testimony on this occasion, they were "surrounded by woods and could not be seen from a distance." Höss did not make more specific statements on this point, nor were they demanded of him. What suggested this statement to Höss —a statement that rather contradicts his affidavit— is not clear. He could not have arrived at this idea on his own, for it is too obviously a product of atrocity propaganda or [177] an outgrowth of inmate fantasies. This is shown by the different treatment it received in the WRB Report, as we noted above.

Not until his Cracow memoir did Höss say anything more precise about the "provisional facilities" which, it is alleged, were used initially for the

[424] IMT XI, 438ff.

extermination of the Jews. This account obviously aimed at achieving a greater appearance of reality than the inmate gossip spread previously, and the WRB Report accounts. In the period that followed, it was therefore adopted as the official version by "contemporary historians." In the report *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz*, Höss was made to describe in detail how he, together with Eichmann, decided the location of the first extermination facility after he had received the extermination order from Himmler. There it is stated (KiA, p. 154):

> We decided that a peasant farmstead situated in the northwest corner of what later became the third building sector at Birkenau would be the most suitable. It was isolated and screened by woods and hedges, and it was also not far from the railroad. The bodies could be placed in long, deep pits dug in the nearby meadows. We had not at the time thought of burning the corpses. We calculated that after gas proofing the premises then available, it would be possible to kill about 800 people simultaneously with a suitable gas. These figures were borne out later in practice. Eichmann could not then give me the starting date for the operation because everything was still in the preliminary stages and the Reichsführer SS had not yet issued the necessary orders.

This brief passage contains three contradictions to Höss' Nuremberg affidavit: According to it, the gassings began "during the summer 1941" (*op. cit.*, paragraph 4), immediately after the orders were received from the RFSS (Reichsführer-SS, Heinrich Himmler), the "extermination building" was "set up" at once (*op. cit.*, paragraph 6), and in Nuremberg Höss knew nothing whatsoever about "long, deep pits" for the burial of corpses. Since, according to Höss, a "farmstead" was selected as the first extermination facility, it naturally could not be located "in the Birch Forest" (WRB 1), or, as the case may be, "nestled in the woods" (Höss' testimony of April 15, 1946); that would be highly unusual for a "farmstead." Hence this statement was more elegantly and descriptively rephrased: "isolated and screened by woods and hedges."

According to the report mentioned above, another extermination facility became necessary because the transports of Jews destined for extermination increased during the summer of 1942. Of this Höss writes (or was forced to write) (*op. cit.*, pp. 156-157):

> The peasant farmstead west of the future site of crematoriums III and IV was selected and made ready. Two huts near bunker I and three near bunker II were erected, in which the victims undressed. Bunker II was the larger and could hold[EMTHRt] [EMEN]about 1,200 people.

According to Höss, Bunker I and II were the official terms for the farm [178] buildings that had been converted to "gas chambers." Höss continues:

> During the summer of 1942 the bodies were still being placed in the mass graves. Toward the end of the summer, however, we started to burn them; at first on wood pyres bearing some 2,000 corpses, and later in pits together with bodies previously buried. In the early days oil was poured on the bodies, but later methanol was used. Bodies were burned in pits, day and night, continuously. By the end of November all the mass graves had been emptied.

In this fashion, nearly all the rumours in circulation about the alleged "provisional extermination facilities" were integrated, in a plausible context, into what is purportedly one of the essential documents of recent history, the "memoirs" of the Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss. This last quotation contradicts, however, the statement that Höss allegedly submitted to Dr. Gilbert, the American prison psychologist at Nuremberg, on April 24, 1946, which was not taken into consideration in the IMT trial (see pp. 134, 141 above). It contained no mention of temporary facilities; but Höss does mention, in connection with the Birkenau crematoria, an "open facility —*i.e.,* an old farm

house was sealed tightly and converted into a gassing area that had a capacity of approximately 1,500 people. The cremation followed in open trenches, using wood as fuel, and this was actually unlimited, so that, according to my calculation, up to 8,000 people could be cremated in a period of 24 hours."

According to this older Höss statement, the fuel used for the cremation of corpses in the open was wood, not oil refuse or methanol. Had it, in the meantime, been realized that the claimed incineration capacity could not have been achieved with wood alone? For safety's sake, this "open facility" was, by the way, also integrated into the later Höss memoirs. There it is stated (KiA, pp. 160-161):

> Provisional structure I was demolished when work was started on building section III of Birkenau. Crematorium II, later designate d bunker V, was used up to the last and was also kept as a stand-by when breakdown occurred in crematoriums I to IV. When larger numbers of transports were being received, gassing was carried out by day in number V and numbers I to IV were used for those transports which arrived by night. The capacity of number V was practically unlimited, so long as cremations could be carried out both day and night.

In this fashion, the connection was established between the Höss memoirs and the Höss-Gilbert document, which also contains the completely erroneous statement that the cremation possibilites of open trenches were unlimited. The originators of this claim obviously had no idea of how difficult and time-consuming the cremation of corpses in the open is, even with the aid of petrochemical fuels, if complete destruction of the human body, right down to ashes, is to be achieved. Above all, this would be impossible in the "deep" pits mentioned not only by Höss, but also by others, since a suffficient and even oxygenation would be [179] lacking. In order to make the fantastic estimate of the number of Jews exterminated that was placed in Höss' mouth appear somewhat believable, this obvious lie had to be resorted to. At Nuremberg, Höss gave the number of Jews gassed as 2 1/2 million.[425] In his Cracow memoirs, the number of the alleged victims was reduced to 1.3 million, which would still seem impossible to a sober mathematician.[426]

The contradictions and increasing "exactness" of Rudolf Höss's claims about the beginning of the alleged extermination of the Jews, made in various stages of his testimony, are noteworthy enough, but they are surpassed by the immense contradictions between Pery Broad's Nuremberg affidavit and the so-called Broad Report. These two "documents" are in total disagreement with one another. The Broad Report, which —as mentioned— was not made public until the year 1965, by a Polish source, also contradicts Höss's Cracow memoir on essential points, though —when considered superficially— they seem to be in agreement.

We have already seen (see p. 175 above) that Broad, in his affidavit, claims to have witnessed only one "gassing" in the old crematorium from a distance, and that was from a hiding place which offered limited possibilities of observation. In the Broad Report, however, this alleged event is described in complete detail (*op. cit.*, pp. 51-55). The SS men involved are mentioned by name. The content of the conversation of the victims as well as that of the SS personnel concerned, as well as the appearance of the victims and the whole

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[425] IMT XI, 458; XXXIII, 275.

[426] *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 162f. On the possible combustion capacity of the crematory ovens constructed by the firm of Topf & Söhne, see above 49f. See on this question also Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

procedure of their murder are all described as though Broad had been right there. Now Broad is suddenly aware that those gassed at that time all wore "yellow Stars of David on their wretched clothing" while, in his affidavit, he made no mention of their ethnic background. According to Höss —as we remember— the victims were Russian prisoners of war. Moreover, the number of victims is also increased in the Broad Report: the 200 people mentioned in the affidavit have now become "three to four hundred people." In the Höss memoirs, of course, as many as 900 Russians are said to have been put to death with gas at that time in the old crematorium, an operation that supposedly lasted "several days" (KiA, pp. 122, 155). The Broad Report states, in conclusion, that the gassing of Jews began in 1942, and that every day "one transport after another" disappeared in the Auschwitz crematorium. This, too, is in contradiction to the Broad affidavit. There Broad merely states that these "measures... were repeated several times in the crematorium in Auschwitz in 1942" without his having observed them (paragraph 4 of the affidavit).

The greatest contradiction between the Höss memoirs and the Broad Report, however, is that, according to the latter, the alleged gassings in the "farm houses" of Birkenau did not begin until 1943, and then only because —according to the Broad Report— the capacity of the old crematorium in Auschwitz was no longer sufficient.[427] Until that time, [180] according to the Broad Report, the old crematorium in Auschwitz, which Höss mentions only in connection with the liquidation of Soviet commissars and other functionaries, alone served for the extermination of Jews.[428]

In the Broad Report, an essentially more thorough —and in some ways different— description is given of the location, appearance, and use of the provisional extermination facilities of Birkenau (*op. cit.*, pp. 56-57). They consisted of "two pretty and clean-looking farm houses... brilliantly whitewashed, with quaint thatched roofs, surrounded by fruit trees." They were set "in a lovely landscape, separated from each other by a small wood." The buildings had "no windows and a disproportionate number of remarkably heavy doors, with rubber gaskets and screw closings." "Several large stables" had been erected in the vicinity, like the ones that served as quarters for the

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[427] According to Höss's Cracow memoirs, the exterminations in the farmhouses began in the spring of 1942; see pp. 174f. above.

[428] *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 122, 155. Broad describes the old crematorium as a "stone building" surrounded "on three sides with mounds of earth" with a "flat concrete ceiling" as a roof. The three mounds of earth were supposedly "planted with small trees and lovely flowers" so that a stranger would not be able "to find it easily." Six air holes "with closed sides and a ventilator" are said to have been built into the ceiling of the mortuary. See Broad Report, pp. 26-28.

In the Höss memoirs one reads that "during the unloading of the Russian transport, several holes were punched in the earth and concrete ceiling of the mortuary," through which the gas "was thrown in" (*Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 122, 155). Here the whole procedure is described as a provisional measure, while the Broad Report creates the impression that the mortuary was built as a gas chamber from the outset.

Of course, the legendary flame which shot several meters high out of the crematorium chimney is not missing from the Broad Report. According to Broad (p. 27), the most amazing thing about this chimney was that it stood several meters from the crematorium and was "connected via underground pipes to the four ovens" in which "four to six bodies at a time" could be burned. How Broad, who had attended a technical institute, could imagine the smoke traveling by underground pipes to the chimney is not explained. But one may assume that this fantastic account does not come from his own hand. The Broad Report has clearly been adjusted to accommodate the "resconstruction" of the crematorium.

prisoners in the Birkenau camp. The victims had to undress in these before they were driven into the "gas chambers." After the "gassing" the corpses were loaded on "flatbed trucks" and hauled to "pits that were surrounded with gigantic fences" from which "clouds of smoke ascended day and night." "Specialists" stacked "a thousand and more" corpses, layer upon layer, in such pits, with wooden boards between each layer, and used methanol to set this "open-air stage" ablaze.

So much for the Broad Report, which undoubtedly gives the impression that Broad witnessed all this himself. From the Broad affidavit, the reliability of which is probably not to be doubted, it emerges that Broad had only heard of these things and did not know any details of them. He states (paragraph 4, last sentence):

> "I discovered from SS men that the bulk of the people designated for gassing were brought directly to Birkenau, where two farm houses which had been converted into gassing bunkers were located. The capacity of these two provisional bunkers was 800 to 1,000 people."

In another passage of the affidavit (paragraph 6), Broad mentions, as at least partially his own observation, that there were only "about 10 large cremation places, where 800 to 1,000 people were cremated on funeral pyres" the glow of which "was visible within a circumference of at least 30 kilometers."

Thus it may be regarded as an established fact that the Broad Report published by the Poles is a later amplification and falsification of the statement Broad had made for the British. For it is totally improbable that the original Broad report contained more information than the sworn affidavit Broad later made in Nuremberg. The "editors" of the report Broad prepared for the British did not succeed in avoiding contradictions with the Höss memoirs, which seems to me to be one of the failures that occur again and again in counterfeits of this type.[429] They obviously knew nothing about the existence of the Broad affidavit; otherwise they probably would not have tampered with the report.
[181]

Crematoria and "Gas Chambers"

According to WRB 1, a "new, modern crematorium with gassing facilities... was dedicated" at the end of February 1943 (*op. cit.*, p. 14). This passage of the report continues:

> The gassing and cremating of corpses in the birch forest was terminated after the four crematoria that were built for this purpose took over the work. The large was filled, the ground leveled, and the ash, as before, used as fertilizer in the agricultural camp at Heimense. Hence it is impossible to find any trace of the horrible mass murders which took place there.[430]

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[429] In the Broad Report it is also stated, in contradiction to Höss, that there were twelve collapsible gallows in the courtyard of Block 11. With this the forgers have surely gone too far, unless this was one of the falsehoods in the original Broad Report with which Broad wanted to gain the favour of the English. In any case this is corrected in the Auschwitz Museum's edition of the report, in a footnote to the effect that there was only one gallows in existence. In a footnote to page 160 of his *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, Rawicz writes that there were "two movable gallows" and also "several posts which, in their appearance, brought to mind gallows." Thus do the Exterminationists, caught once more in the self-woven well of their own lies, struggle desperately to save what there is to save.

[430] By "Heimense" is probably meant the experimental agricultural camp Harmense, near Auschwitz. There is no mention of four crematoria, nor of the fact that today no traces of the mass murder in the birch forest are to be found, in the Vrba-Wetzler report published in Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner (*op. cit.*, p. 248).

The report is cautiously silent about the dates of completion the three other crematoria that were put into operation after the opening of the first crematorium. Here we notice already signs of uncertainty on this point, something that must arouse doubt even as to the actual number of the crematorium buildings erected in Birkenau (see pp. 47ff. above). Yet the claim that four crematoria with gassing facilities existed in Birkenau was elevated to the rank of the official version no later than the publication of the alleged Cracow memoirs of Höss.

WRB 1 also provides the first information about the nature of the four "death factories." They are depicted as follows:

> At present, four crematoria are now in operation in Birkenau, two larger ones, I and II, and two smaller, III and IV. Crematoria I and II consist of three parts, *viz*: A, the oven room; B, the large hall; C, the gas chamber. A large chimney ascends from the oven room, around which nine ovens are grouped, each of which can accommodate three normal corpses; in one and a half hours, these are completely consumed. That translates into a daily capacity of some 2,000 corpses. Beside the oven room there is a large "reception hall" which gives the impression of the anteroom of a large bath house. It has a capacity of 2,000 people; evidently there is a similar waiting room on the floor below. From there a door and several steps lead down to a very long and narrow gas chamber. The walls of this gas chamber have likewise been given the appearance of entrances to bathing rooms in order to deceive the victims. The roof is provided with three hatches, which can be hermetically sealed from the outside... [At this point, claims are made about the gassing procedure —Author]... Crematoria III and IV operate on basically the same principle, but their capacity is only half as great. The total capacity of the four cremation and gassing facilities in Birkenau is approximately 6,000 people daily.

This account is illustrated with a floor plan of the entire facility (*op. cit.*, pp. 14-16). The most amazing thing about it is the alleged rail track leading directly from the gas chamber to the oven room, on which —according to the description of the conduct of a "gassing" (*op. cit.*, p. 16)— the corpses of the gassing victims are hauled to the crematorium on flat trucks. According to the floor plan, the rail tracks go right through the middle of the reception hall. Since the gas chamber is one floor below and separated from this room by several stairs, it remains unclear how [182] this was accomplished. We have seen that later descriptions —for example, the one by Nyiszli— solved the problem with the help of freight elevators (see p. 204 above), of which, up to this point, there is no mention in the WRB Report.

A number of other things seem questionable, indeed even ridiculous, about this description: What was the function of the waiting room located directly below and of the same size as the reception room? Similarly, the question as to how the nine ovens in the crematorium were all connected to a single chimney cannot be answered, even with the aid of the floor plan. According to this plan, there was no possibility of connecting at least four of the ovens directly to the chimney. Moreover, the cremation capacity is undoubtedly placed too high, if one proceeds from the alleged time for cremation and the capacity of the ovens, taking into account the absolutely necessary preparation and cleaning time. Uncertainty also remains about whether the stairs led to the gas chambers from the reception room or from the waiting room located on the floor below. Was the latter a basement room or was it at ground level? To provide the reception hall and the gas chamber with the appearance of anterooms to a bath house would seem senseless in view of the tracks running through both rooms; this simply just does not fit in with the claim that the victims were to be deceived.

It is noteworthy that some of these ambiguities were omitted from the version of the Vrba/Wetzler report published in Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's book (*op. cit.*, pp. 243ff.). The claim that below the reception hall —in this report called the "preparation hall"— yet another waiting room of the same size was located is missing. This makes it clear that stairs from the reception hall (preparation hall) led to the gas chamber. Further, it is expressly stated that the rail tracks went from the gas chamber "through the hall." The problem of how these rail tracks could lead from the gas chamber to the "preparation hall" located on the floor above and yet remain hidden from the victims who were to be deceived is, however, not solved in this edited version of the Vrba/Wetzler report. The deception of the victims inside the gas chamber is described somewhat more plausibly than in WRB 1, since it is stated (*op. cit.*, p. 248): "The walls are masked with dummy shower fixtures so that it looks like a gigantic washroom."

WRB 1, on the other hand, also represents the gas chamber as only a kind of anteroom to the actual bathing rooms. It is always necessary to bear in mind here that both reports allegedly originated with the same person. Are we required to waste one more word on their lack of credibility?

No less incredible is WRB 2, according to which the four crematoria were supposedly ready for use in the autumn of 1942 (*op. cit.*, p. 13). Typically, nothing is mentioned about the appearance and nature of the buildings. But it seems as though the crematoria of WRB 2 served only [183] for the cremation of corpses, while the gassings were supposedly carried out in the "special gassing barracks" mentioned earlier in this book (see p. 176 above). It is difficult to realize how the War Refugee Board could combine such a variety of contradictory reports in a single document and even declare in its foreword that these reports present a picture in accordance with the facts as to the "terrible events" within the "extermination camps" of Auschwitz and Birkenau. It is understandable, however, that the WRB Report had to vanish in it entirety when it was later attempted to provide a somewhat more believable and unified picture of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp.

While the dimensions of the crematoria buildings are not reported in WRB 1 and 2, Vrba relates to us in his book, which appeared about 20 years later, that crematorium I went into operation "in January 1943" —according to WRB 1, it was the "end of February 1943"— and was "approximately 100 meters (330 ft.) long and 50 meters (165 ft.) wide" which comes to a total surface area of 5,000 square meters (54,450 square ft.). If one proceeds on the premise that two of the four crematoria were —as is usually claimed— of the same construction (see WRB 1; also p. 234 above) and crematoria I and II had approximately twice the cremation capacity of the smaller crematoria, III and IV, the latter ones must have had a surface area of approximately 2,500 square meters each (27,225 square ft.). These gigantic dimensions are, however, far out of proportion to the foundations, which still exist today (see p. [ENENEN] above), or to the specifications in the previously mentioned building plans. Since we have noted elsewhere that Vrba is a notorious liar, we need not be surprised at this. By the way, the entire dilemma of the gassing legend comes here into focus: On the one hand, the size of the crematoria buildings reported by Vrba obviously contradicts the reality, while, on the other, only buildings of such a large scale lend a measure of credibility to the claim that the gas

chambers could accommodate 2,000 to 4,000 people. This is probably the reason that Vrba finally settled on these dimensions.

The same or similar considerations probably led Vrba also to increase the capacity of the crematoria in his post-war report as opposed to his claims in WRB 1. According to Vrba, the big, new crematorium had 14 cremation ovens, each of which could reduce three corpses to ashes within 20 minutes (*op. cit.*, pp. 16-17). That corresponds to a cremation capacity of 3,024 corpses within 24 hours. According to WRB 1, this crematorium had —as we remember— only 9 ovens, each with four openings, of which each also had a capacity of three corpses. Neverthe less, the larger facility had a cremation capacity of only 1,728 corpses in 24 hours, since WRB 1 correctly calculated the cremation time for each corpse at approximately one and a half hours.[431] Why Vrba retreated from this estimate —which is the only believable statement in WRB 1— is a question that cannot be answered. Possibly he wanted to be in [184] agreement with the Höss memoir, which, in the meantime, had been elevated to the rank of a historical source. In the Höss memoir, the cremation time for one corpse is likewise set at 20 minutes.[432]

Besides these several remarks, some of which contradict WRB 1, Vrba has nothing to report to his readers about the Birkenau crematoria. He remains completely silent about the layout and appearance of the alleged gas chambers.

We learn more and more new things, however, from our legendary informant Miklos Nyiszli. He gives the following description of the crematoria and gas chambers of Birkenau:

The “cremation hall” is “approximately one hundred and fity meters long, a bright room with whitewashed walls and concrete floor.” The windows have “sturdy iron bars.” Beside each of the “fifteen cremation ovens” there is a ventilator. These 15 ventilators are supposed to “adjust the fire in the ovens to the required temperature. Connected to the crematorium are an underground “disrobing room” and a gassing room of the same size. Each of these rooms has a capacity of 3,000 people and is 200 meters (660 ft.) long (no estimate is given of the width); they are adjacent to one another. The disrobing room is furnished with benches and with hooks for the victims' clothing. In the middle of the gas chamber are “pillars” 30 meters (100 ft.) apart from each other, reaching from “the floor to the ceiling.” These are not “support pillars, but sheet metal pipes with many holes drilled through them.” Each is connected to an opening in the roof of the gas chamber, which can be sealed. The gas “Zyklon” is dropped through these; it reacts “as soon as it comes into contact with the air.” It “escapes immediately through the holes of the pillars and fills the chamber below within seconds.” Twenty minutes after the gas has been dropped in, “the electric ventilators are turned on in order to dispel the poisonous gas.” In another room, which because of its function must be located directly beneath the cremation hall, are “four large freight elevators” each of which can take 20 to 25 corpses and deliver them “up to the burning hall of the crematorium.” Altogether there were four such crematoria with gas chambers,

[431] This calculation does not take into account the tasks that would have had to be done in between, such as transporting the bodies, disposing of the ashes, clearing up, etc.

[432] See *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 167. This statement is completely unrealistic because even today the cremation of a body is not possible in such a short time, as every expert on cremation will confirm. Höss must have known this; but the “editors” of his “autobiography” were apparently laymen in that field.

and they were "almost equal in size." After the hair was cut and the gold teeth removed by the "*Sonderkommando*" which was made up of inmates, "three corpses at a time" were placed "on a conveyor made of laminated steel" and pushed through the "heavy iron doors" of the ovens, which opened "automatically" into the crematorium, where they were consumed "within twenty minutes." Each day "several thousand people can be cremated" in the crematoria.[433]

So much for this Nyiszli version, which diverges completely from what is related in comparable detail and length in WRB 1. Its author was evidently concerned about being too contradictory of the "official" Höss version, as set forth in Höss's Cracow memoir *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz*. For that reason, it may be deliberately unclear on many decisive points —the arrangement of the ovens, the situation of the gas chambers in relation to the respective crematoria, the size of the rooms, *etc*. There can be no doubt that the Nyiszli memoirs have undergone changes —apart from the ones noted by Rassinier— since they were first published in the year 1951. Hence they are useless as source material on recent history, though they reflect a certain development of the Auschwitz legend and are of interest for that reason. The fact that they —like all other "eyewitness" accounts— contain gross impossibilities can hardly be overlooked. The 15 ventilators which supposedly adjusted the fire in the ovens "to the required temperature" are just as much nonsense as the alleged time of 20 minutes for cremation or the gigantic dimensions of the cremation facilities, which surpass even those in the Vrba report. Since the legend is, from the standpoint of technology, so much nonsense —as has been established again and again— one cannot go into details without creating absurdities. The perforated pillars in the gassing room, which would have been completely superfluous so far as the administration of the gas is concerned, are typical of the imaginative embellishment of "latrine gossip."

Another quite different description of the "death factories" is given in the Broad Report. It includes the following about the four new crematoria in Birkenau (*op. cit.*, p. 67):

> Two of them had subterranean gas chambers which could hold about 4,000 persons at a time. Two three-room gas chambers were added to the ground floor of two somewhat smaller crematories. In addition, each one of the murder factories had a huge hall in which the "resettlers" had to undress. In Crematories 1 and 2, these halls were underground. A 6-foot-wide stone staircase led down to them... Crematories 1 and 2 each had fifteen ovens, each of which could accommodate four to five bodies.

While WRB 1 and Vrba are ambiguous about the location of the gas chambers and the final Nyiszli version transfers all the gas chambers and disrobing rooms underground, according to this Broad Report, the gas chambers and disrobing rooms in two of the crematoria were situated underground, whereas the rest of them were built onto the crematoria buildings aboveground. This uncertain and contradictory reporting of the

[433] All quotations from Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner, pp. 84ff. The description in Schoenberner (*Wir haben es gesehen*, pp. 248ff.) is similar. That in numerous details deviations exist in the two versions of the report has not been considered here; this has already been dealt with elsewhere (pp. 156f. above). To what extent these differ from the Nyiszli reports published in *Les Temps Modernes* and in the magazine *Quick*, which, as Rassinier showed, also deviate from each other, I was unable to investigate (see also p. 155 above).

layout of the gas chambers is actually sufficient evidence that they merely existed in the imagination of these "eyewitnesses."

The 15 ovens mentioned in the Broad Report were supposedly located side by side (*op. cit.*, p. 68), while, according to WRB 1, they were grouped around a single chimney; Nyiszli makes no comment about the location of the ovens. Were any of these "eyewitnesses" ever inside one of the Birkenau crematoria? At least in the case of Broad, to judge by his Nuremberg affidavit of October 20, 1947, the answer to this question would have to be negative. For according to the contents of that document, Broad obtained his information about Birkenau from [186] other people's stories. That the Broad Report pretends the opposite demonstrates that it has been manipulated (see also p. 233 above). It evinces certain similarities with the Cracow Höss memoirs, without, of course, going into as much detail as they do. One must realize that the Broad Report, in its present form, could have come into existence only after the Höss memoirs, when the technical impossibilities contained in this "document" had possibly been at last recognized.

And with that —if one follows the "contemporary historians" of today— we have come to the most important "eyewitness" on the Birkenau "death factories" the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, who, soon after the completion of the memoirs that he more or less wrote, in a Polish dungeon, died on a gallows erected in Auschwitz by his jailers.

As we already know, Höss gave no details about the crematoria and gas chambers of Birkenau either in his Nuremberg affidavit or in his testimony at the IMT trial. He did not mention even the number of such structures, and, strange to say, was not asked about it.

Not until the previously discussed Gilbert document (see pp. 141f. above) did Höss —insofar as he is the author of this document— make more detailed statements on this subject. According to this, there were supposedly "two large crematoria" in Birkenau, each of which had "five double ovens" (fired with coke). Up to 2,000 people could be cremated in each of them in the space of 24 hours. In addition, there were "two smaller facilities" in operation, each "with four larger double ovens" that could "eliminate approximately 1,500 people" presumably also within 24 hours, although that is not expressly stated in the document submitted by Gilbert. The gas chambers, the number and location of which are not mentioned in the Gilbert document, were allegedly "done up like showers, *i.e.*, there were shower heads and water pipes throughout and drains on the floor." The gas "Cyklon B" was —as it is again very vaguely and imprecisely expressed in this document— dropped down "from above, through special openings." Up to 2,500 people could be put to death "in one gassing room." Adding the previously mentioned "open air facility" (see p. 178 above), it was possible, according to the Gilbert document, to "exterminate and dispose of up to 10,000 people in 24 hours in the facilities described above."[434]

The Gilbert document is, as a whole, also remarkably unclear and confused, even though Höss, for the first time, goes into more detail about the alleged gas chambers and crematoria in Birkenau. In part, its contents are so

[434] Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 448ff. Gilbert notes that this "document," a statement supposedly written in pencil (!), can be found in the records of the Eichmann Trial. In any case the "document" was at that time accepted by the court as evidence; see Nellessen, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

illogical that one is surprised that this "document" was submitted to the public by a psychologist, of all people. Assuming that two corpses could be cremated in each "double oven" which would perhaps be normal, and that the cremation of one corpse normally takes 90 minutes, up to 160 corpses could have been processed within a 24-hour period in the larger crematoria and 128 corpses in the "smaller" crematoria, which, oddly enough, had "larger" double ovens. This does [188] not include the required preparation and cleaning time. We cannot determine how Höss, under the "guidance" of this psychologist, arrived at the alleged cremation capacity of 2,000, or, as the case may be, 1,500 corpses within 24 hours. Without going into details here, the reported killing capacity of all four facilities combined is no less illogical and contradictory.

We at last find a description of the Birkenau gas chambers and crematoria which goes into further detail in the report *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz*, allegedly written by Höss in November 1946, although the question remains open as to what extent this report can be attributed to Höss. Despite its contradictions of other "sources" and even of earlier statements by Höss, the apostles of the extermination legend represent it as authentic and view it as the "most authoritative testimony."[435] We shall consider in a separate section the question of whether that view can be justified.

In this alleged Höss memoir, the following can be read about the subject of our investigation (*op. cit.*, pp. 160-161):

> The two large crematoriums I and II were built in the winter of 1942-43 and brought into use in the spring of 1943. They had five three-retort ovens and could be completely aired out. The bodies were taken to the ovens on the foor above by means of an elevator. The gas chambers could hold about 3,000 people, but this number was never reached, since the individual transports were as large as that.
>
> The two smaller crematoriums III and IV were capable, according to calculations made by the construction firm, Topf of Erfurt, of burning about 1,500 bodies within twenty-four hours. Due to the wartime shortage of materials the builders were compelled to economize during the construction of crematoriums III and IV and they were therefore built aboveground, with the ovens of a less solid construction.
>
> It soon became apparent, however, that the flimsy construction of these two four-retort ovens did not come up to the requirements. Number III failed completely after a short time and later ceased to be used altogether. Number IV had to be repeatedly shut down, since after its fires had been burning for from four to six weeks, the ovens or chimneys burned out. The gassed bodies were mostly burned in pits behind crematorium IV.

The damages to crematorium IV mentioned here are confirmed to a certain extent by a letter, published in Kühnl's collection of documents, from the firm of Topf & Söhne, dated April 10, 1943, in which the firm states that it is prepared to remove the cracks that had "recently" appeared in the "8-muffle ovens in crematorium IV" (*op. cit.*, p. 395). According to Höss, this crematorium had two "four-retort ovens," which can hardly be the same thing. To be sure, Höss designated the Birkenau crematoria as I to IV, while today in the literature they are almost universally identified by the numerals II to V. In accordance

[435] Thus, for example, Rawicz in his forward to *KL Auschwitz in den Augen des SS* (p. 15). Rawicz points out that the Höss "document" was not only stressed in dozens of works by historians, attorneys, psychologists and philosophers, but was also an object of deliberations by the courts" and was a basis for accusations against "instigators" and "perpetrators" of "unimaginable crimes." This may be somewhat exaggerated. However, the fact is that the Höss "autobiography" played a leading role in the Auschwitz trial, and in the testimony presented by experts at this trial; it was the only document besides the Broad Report which could "substantiate" the thesis of the extermination of Jews by gassing at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

with the current numbering, Höss could have been referring to crematorium V. According to the previously mentioned construction department list, this went into operation on April 4. 1943, while the damages mentioned [188] in the Kühnl document came to light on April 3 - that is, one clay earlier. On the other hand, crematorium IV was - according to the construction list - the first of the four crematoria to be put into operation. How does that jibe with Höss's claim that the smaller crematoria — that is, III and IV, or, as the case may be, IV and V - were constructed was a shortage of building materials, if one of them actually had been completed before the two large crematoria? In that case, the building materials would actually have had its effect during the construction of these large crematoria.

As can be seen, nothing in these documents seems to be in agreement. Given the constantly recurring unclear and contradictory statements, one almost despairs of making a thorough study of this material.

The Cracow Höss memoirs, however, contain even more remarkable departures from the Gilbert document. In the former, the larger crematoria "each had five double ovens." In the latter, they have "five three-retort ovens." Even more striking is the difference in the smaller crematoria, which Höss at one time states had "four larger double ovens each" and, at the same time, "two four-retort ovens each," which, moreover, were of lighter construction. With regard to the cremation the two documents are in agreement. In the Cracow Höss memoirs, the attempt is made to make this capacity seem credible by expressly stating that the cremation of a corpse took 20 minutes - as Vrba and Nyiszli also asserted - and likewise by claiming that "up to three corpses could be put into one oven at the same time" (*op. cit.*, p. 167). The technical impossibility of this time period for cremation has already been pointed out repeatedly.

In particular, Höss's contradictory statements about the nature of the ovens - on which matter Höss must certainly have been coached -clearly show that Höss, if the manuscript originated from his hand, was stating what was demanded of him, not what he himself knew or should have known. He had - as Eichmann'ds defence attorney Servatius expressed it - "submitted completely" (see p. 139 above). Otherwise, such contradictions as these, at least, would not have been possible.

In the Cracow memoirs, the exact location of the Birkenau crematoria is given for the first time. According to it, they were "erected at the end of the two main thoroughfares in Birkenau camp" (*op. cit.*, p. 161), which, significantly, is in accord with the groundplans submitted by the Poles. It is actually happenstance that the time of publication of the Höss memoirs coincided with the completion of the "transformation" of the former concentration camp grounds into an "Auschwitz Museum"?[436]

Another interesting peculiarity is found in the Höss Cracow memoirs with regard to the "gas chambers." They were "furnished with showers and water pipes" and "it was planned to use the gas chambers as [189] bathhouses when the extermination actions came to an end" (*op. cit.*, pp. 161 and 166).

[436] Laternser expressed himself very cautiously on his refusal to visit the site during the trial, to the effect that the dedication of the Auschwitz area "for museum purposes... had been preceded by substantial rebuilding... and also... tendentious explanations." See *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 48 and 411.

According to this Höss report, then, they were not just dummy fixtures, as is usually claimed. Had it been found that real shower rooms were present in Birkenau and were they only afterwards - as in the case of many other camps - falsely declared to be gas chambers? In any case, it is hardly believable that genuine shower rooms would have been converted into gas chambers instead of being used for their intended function.[437]

That the statements placed in Höss's mouth about the Birkenau crematoria and gas chambers contradict the statement of the other "eyewitnesses" on so many points is so obvious that it does not have to be discussed any further. Since their essential elements are far removed from reality and thus run counter to healthy common sense, one can only be amazed at how anybody could think of attributing significant value to the Cracow Höss memoirs as a source on recent history.

Further Details

Several details that play a role in the legend remain to be considered. One of the most important is that, according to many witness testimonies, an unbearable stench, supposedly emanating from the outdoor cremation of corpses, pervaded the Auschwitz area. This stench is repeatedly adduced as "evidence" of the extermination of Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is overlooked that this claim cannot be reconciled with the allegation that there was an order to keep the extermination of the Jews secret.

It is characteristic and revealing that WRB 1 and 2 do not say a word about this unpleasant odor. Certainly this must be connected with the fact - pointed out by Butz (*Hoax*, pp. 53-99; pp. 61-129 of the German edition) - that the Auschwitz and Birkenau camps were not officially included in the Auschwitz atrocity propaganda as "extermination camps" until very late, namely, in November 1944. This very late awareness would be completely inexplicable had the extermination of the Jews, which according to the legend began no later than the spring of 1942, made itself perceptible through the stench that allegedly accompanied it.

However, in view of the very questionable evidence on hand, it was decided to seize on the additional piece of "evidence" for the alleged mass murder - even if only cautiously and reservedly - as early as the time of the Nuremberg IMT trial. Thus Höss was made to state the following in his affidavit of April 5, 1946 (*op. cit.*, end of paragraph 7):

> We were required to carry out these exterminations in secrecy but of course the foul odor and nauseating stench from the continuous burning of bodies permeated the entire area and all of the people living in the surrounding communities knew that exterminations were going on at Auschwitz.[438]

[190]

According to its context, this testimony of Höss's referred exclusively to the extermination of Jews. When the defence attorney Dr. Kaufmann asked Höss, in conjunction with the reading into the record of the affidavit, whether he - Höss - would agree with him that one might conclude from the stench

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[437] From Rassinier's memoir of his camp experience, *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, one learns that the inmates of the camp associated, over and over, the numerous shower rooms with the rumours which circulated about killings by gas (*op. cit.*, pp. 120, 153, 191).

[438] Quoted from Poliakov-Wulf, *op. cit.*, p. 129; see IMT XXXIII, 278 and Butz, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

caused by the cremation of corpses alone that Jews were being exterminated, and Höss answered in the affirmative, the chief justice of the Tribunal abruptly called a halt to cross-examination on this point. No doubt Höss had again strayed too far from the pattern dictated to him. For it must be assumed that in the course of the typhus epidemics that raged at various times in the Auschwitz region victims of these epidemics actually were cremated repeatedly on funeral pyres outdoors on a more or less large scale, especially before there was a crematorium in Birkenau. Höss had already confirmed that much when questioned by the defence attorney, Dr. Kaufmann, in regard to people who had "died a normal death in Auschwitz," and had thereby already involved himself, in a certain sense, in contradiction to the statement in his affidavit quoted above.[439]

In the Cracow Höss memoirs, it is again expressly claimed that the "stench of burning flesh was carried for many miles and caused the whole neighborhood to talk about the burning of the Jews. This situation, as well as the protests of the air defence services over'fires which could be seen from great distances at night,' eventually led to the construction of the four crematoria in Birkenau (KiA, pp. 160-161).

Thus, to a certain extent, allowances were made for the previously mentioned idea of secrecy, even though a little later in the Höss memoir it is stated, in contrast, that one of the provisional extermination facilities was "used up to the last and was also kept as a stand-by" in addition to the crematoria (KiA, pp. 160-161). Obviously, it was difficult to reconcile the claim that the alleged extermination of the Jews was of a secret character with the desire to present as many witnesses as possible to the slaughter.

In the Broad Report, which otherwise offers little that is concrete, this desire is, as had already been shown (see p. 145 above), clearly in the foreground; the Allies wished to provide a basis for the prosecution of the employees of IG Farben, who at that time were on trial before the Nuremberg Military Tribunal. The Broad Report, which presumably was to perform the same function at the Auschwitz Trial, points in the same direction. Witnesses to the pervasive odor of burning corpses and the "nightly glow of the flames" (*op. cit.*, p. 64) were naturally witnesses to the extermination of the Jews in the alleged gas chambers of Birkenau, an obviously absurd conclusion.

Particularly important for the assessment of the credibility of our "eyewitnesses" must, in the final analysis, be what they report about the "gassings" as such. Here, too, contradictory accounts are presented, in the case of which, moreover, it can be recognized from certain details [191] that we are dealing with products of pure fantasy.

Let us begin with the entrance of the victims into the alleged gas chambers. Regarding this matter, it is stated in WRB 1 that the candidates for death were "so packed into the confined space that there was only standing

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[439] IMT XI, 464. During my three-month stay in the Auschwitz area (in mid-1944), I never noticed the alleged stench in least, not even on my several visits to the main camp. See on this also Christophersen, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

Butz (*op. cit.*, pp. 118ff.) takes the position that the stench, which was confirmed by many witnesses, had its origin in the chemical industry around Auschwitz, and had nothing to do with body-burning. The industrial area was located, however, near Monowitz, approximately nine kilometres from Birkenau, and some six kilometres from Auschwitz; the odour is supposed to have emanated from Birkenau.

room;" often shots were fired to make those inside the chamber crowd closer together (*op. cit.*, p. 16). The other reports say nothing of this. Höss even expressly says in memoir *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz* that the "operation nearly always went smoothly" (KiA, p. 166). Otherwise, how could the victims have been deceived, a point on which all the other reports — strange to say, even WRB 1— are in agreement?

Before the gas was dropped into the gas chamber, there was, according to WRB 1, a "brief delay, presumably to bring the temperature of the room to a certain point." After that, SS men with masks climbed on the roof and, after opening the traps, dropped in the gas (*op. cit.*, p. 16). According to Nyiszli, however, that took place immediately after the doors to the gas chamber were locked. The SS man, according to this description, had only to enter the grass plot above the underground gas chamber, then lift the covers from the "concrete sockets"[440] which were thirty meters apart and which sealed the previously mentioned perforated "pillars" in the gassing room. And even Rudolf Höss, the most competent witness —according to current opinion— states, in his Cracow memoir *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz*, that the gas was "discharged by the waiting disinfectors through vents in the ceilings of the gas chambers, down a shaft that led to the floor" "immediately" after the gas chamber was sealed (KiA, p. 166). In the Gilbert document, he even states that this took place "simultaneously" with the sealing of the gas chamber. From Höss's description it is totally unclear how the "shafts" that transported the gas were configured. In both the larger crematoria, they had to pass through the cremation room, since, according to his description, the gas chambers in these crematoria were located directly below (KiA, p. 160). WRB 2, Vrba, and Broad provide no details on this question.[441]

There is no complete agreement about the nature and appearance of the gas used. According to WRB 1, it was a powder called "Cyklon" which came packaged in tin cans bearing the legend: "For use against vermin" (*op. cit.*, p. 16). WRB 2, however, mentions "hydrocyanic bombs" which were dropped down the ventilation openings (*op. cit.*, p. 13). In both cases, it remains uncertain what kind of gas was used and how it worked. The use of gas in the form of a bomb is a particularly amusing variation of the gas chamber legend.

Nyiszli simply describes the gas as "Zyklon" a "violet, crumbly mass" which was packaged in "green tin cans." This, however, is only according to Adler, Langbein, and Lingens-Reiner's Nyiszli (*op. cit.*, p. 86). Schoenberner's Nyiszli explains, in contradiction to this, that a "B-chlor [192] in powder form" was used (*op. cit.*, p. 250). Both Nyiszlis are in agreement only that the "Zyklon" changed into a gaseous state as soon as it came into contact with the air.

Vrba is also quite vague and unclear in regard to the characteristics of the gas. He speaks of "Zyklon-B crystals" which generated a "hydrocyanic gas"

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[440] *Op. cit.*, p. 86; in Schoenberner's version of Nyiszli it reads "concrete chimneys" (*op. cit.*, p. 250).

[441] In other reports, according to which gas chambers were located beneath the crematorium rooms, the question as to how the in-put shafts were configured is never answered either. Compare for example the description of gas chambers in the report of the Auschwitz trial witness Jehuda Bacon in Deutschkron, *op. cit.*, pp. 64f. See on this testimony also footnote 131 to this chapter.

as a result —so he thinks— of the "heat produced by the bodies crowded so closely together" (*op. cit.*, pp. 18-19).

Broad likewise speaks of "Zyklon-B" (paragraph 5 of the affidavit), containers of which he claims to have seen at close hand, which bore the following legend: "Zyklon-B for combating pests. Careful, poison! To be opened only by trained personnel."

Thus it was disclosed for the first time that this preparation, which had been used for pest control long before the war, had also served for the murder of Jews in gas chambers. The Broad Report elabourates that the "hydrocyanic gas" escaped from "blue, pea-sized pellets" when the "tin cans" were emptied (*op. cit.*, p. 54).[442]

From the beginning, the testimonies of Rudolf Höss made reference to the insecticide "Zyklon B." While neither in his affidavit of April 5, 1946 nor in the written statement he prepared for the prison psychologist Gilbert, dated April 24, 1946, did he mention the real purpose and use of this preparation, in his Cracow memoir he states that "Cyklon B gas was... constantly used in Auschwitz for the destruction of vermin, and there was consequently always a supply of these tins of gas on hand" (KiA, p. 155). This statement cannot be doubted, and so it was simple to make use of this fact for the legend of the extermination of the Jews, absurd though it may seem.

The duration of a gassing was, according to most reports, very short indeed and lasted only a few minutes. According to WRB 1, death came after three minutes; WRB 2 offers no definite time span. It mentions, however, that the doors of the gas chamber were opened again after about ten minutes (*op. cit.*, p. 13). In his affidavit, Broad says that the "action" he observed was completed after about five minutes (*op. cit.*, paragraph 4). According to the Broad Report, Grabner, the SS officer who was in charge of the gassing, clocked the time "with scientific detachment" by the second hand of his wrist watch at exactly four minutes (*op. cit.*, p. 54). Vrba refrains from specifying the exact time, and Nyiszli claims that "Zyklon" kills "reliably within five minutes" (*op. cit.*, p. 87; also Schoenberner, p. 250).

In the testimonies of Höss, contradictory claims are made as to the duration of the gassing procedure. In his Nuremberg affidavit of April 5, 1946 (paragraph 6) and in the statement he submitted to Gilbert, he asserted that killing by means of Zyklon B required, according to "weather conditions and the number of those confined" in the gas chamber, or, as the case may be, according to "climatic conditions" approximately three to fifteen minutes. In his Cracow autobiography, he [193] reports that the first gassing was "carried out in the detention cells of block 11" and "death came instantaneously the moment the Cyclon was thrown in" (KiA, p. 122). On the other hand, a little

[442] In answer to the leading question of the presiding judge in the Ausc hwitz Trial that Zyklon B was probably a "granular material," the accused, Arthur Breitwieser, former chief of the Auschwitz disinfection department, described the material in the following way (cited after Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 70): "The Zyklon B was in small cans of approximately one kilogram. In the beginning there were paper discs similar to beer coasters, always a little damp and grey. Later, there were no more paper discs. Its difficult to describe —not exactly like starch, but something like it, bluish white."

Breitwieser, as chief of the disinfection department, should have known exactly what Zyklon B looked like. Oddly enough it has been described like that nowhere else.

later he says, in reference to a gassing in the old crematorium: "I do not know how long this killing took" (*ibid.*).

n his article *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz*, which allegedly was written before the autobiography —Höss recalls more exactly. There he states (*op. cit.*, pp. 165-166):

> Experience has shown that the preparation of prussic acid called Cyclon B caused death with far greater speed and certainty, especially if the rooms were kept dry and gastight and closely packed with people, and provided they were fitted with as large a number of intake vents as possible. So far as Auschwitz is concerned, I have never known or heard of a single person being found alive when the gas chambers were opened, half an hour after the gas had been thrown in.
>
> ...It could be observed through the peephole in the door that those who were standing nearest to the vents were killed at once. It can be said that about onethird died straight away. The remainder staggered about and began to scream and struggle for air. The screaming, however, soon changed to the death rattle and in a few minutes all lay still. After twenty minutes at the latest no movement could be discerned. The time required for the gas to take effect varied according to the[EMTHRt] [EMTH]weather, and depended on whether it was damp or dry, cold or warm. It also depended on the quality of the gas, which was never exactly the same, and on the composition of the transports which might contain a high proportion of healthy Jews, or old and sick, or children. The victims became unconscious after a few minutes, according to their distance from the intake shaft. Those who screamed and those who were old or sick or weak, or the small children, died quicker than those who were healthy or young.
>
> The door was opened half an hour after the gas was thrown in, and the ventilation switched on.

It is noteworthy how cleverly this passage about the duration of death by gassing was composed. Thus it provides a certain credibility to all reports of his kind —even those which speak of a longer death agony for the victims.[443] To be sure, it is difficult to accept this description as having been written by Höss. Also, doubt as to the alleged causes fo differences in the time gas took effect would seem to be thoroughly justified. This passage hardly agrees with what Höss reported in his autobiography about how Zyklon B worked. There it is stated (KiA, p. 122):

> The doctors explained to me that the prussic acid had a paralyzing effect on the lungs, but its action was so quick and strong that death came before the convulsions could set in, and in this its effects differed from those produced by carbon monoxide or by a general oxygen deficiency.

Irreconcilable contradictions appear in the testimonies of the "eyewitnesses" in regard to their description of the condition of those who died by gassing. It is significant that most of the accounts avoid going into particulars. Even the WRB report contains not a word about it, [194] although one would expect some detail from these alleged firsthand informants. Naturally, Vrba also remains silent, and the unusually talkative Broad confines himself to a few general statements. The Russians who died by gassing in the

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[443] The victims supposedly screamed indescribably for approximately 8 to 10 minutes after the gas was tossed in, according to the testimony of a former SS man named Böck —cited by Kaul, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

At the Auschwitz trial the defendant Breitwieser described the effect of Zyklon B in a completely different way, according to Naumann (*op. cit.*, p. 70). Under questioning he explained as follows: "The Zyklon B worked terribly fast. I remember that Unterscharführer Theurer once entered a house which had already been disinfected. The ground floor had been aired out the evening before, and he wanted to open up the windows on the second floor next morning. He must have inhaled the fumes: He fell down immediately, and rolled unconscious down the stairs, where he got fresh air. If he had fallen in the other direction, he would not have come out alive."

According to Breitwieser's testimony, Zyklon B was used for disinfecting rooms and clothes. He knew nothing of its use in killing human beings - and was acquitted!

Broad Report are described as "bloated" and having a "peculiar bluish cast" (*op. cit.*, p. 50). But in the same report the appearance of the first gassed Jews is described as follows (*op. cit.*, p. 50):

> With mouths wide open, the leaning corpses sag together slightly. At the door they are packed together especially tightly. In their death agony, they had all crowded there in the hope of forcing it open... It is hard to tear the mangled mass of corpses out of the gas chamber because the gas has stiffened the limbs.

Even in death the Jews obviously are different from Russians!

A very extensive and, for the most part, fantasy-based description of not only the appearance, but also of the death throes of the gassing victims, is contained in the report of the legendary Miklos Nyiszli, in which the following can be read:

> The corpses are not lying scattered about the room but are piled high on top of each other. That is simple to explain: The Zyklon, which was dropped in from outside, generates its deadly gas nearest to the floor. The upper layers of air are reached only later. That is why these unfortunates trample each other and climb on top of each other. What a terrible struggle for two minutes more of life...
>
> Tangled up with one another, with scratched bodies, bleeding from nose and mouth, they lie there. Their heads are blue and bloated and distorted beyond recognition. Nevertheless, the men of the *Sonderkommando* frequently recognize the bodies of their relatives.
>
> *Sonderkommando* in their rubber boots stand around the mountain of corpses and wash down the corpses with a stream of water from a hose. The reason for this is that death by gassing causes the intestines to void with the final reflex movement. Every corpse is soiled.
>
> After the "bath" the tangled corpses are freed from one another... Leather straps are buckled around the fists, clenched in the throes of death, and the corpses, slippery from the water, are dragged to the elevator.[444]

In the alleged Höss memoir *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwit*z, the appearance of those gassed to death is described thus:

> There was no noticeable change in the bodies and no sign of convulsions or discoloration. Only after the bodies had been left lying for some time, that is to say after several hours, did the usual death stains appear in the places where they had lain. Soiling through opening of the bowels was also rare. There were no signs of wounding of any kind. The faces showed no distortion.[445]

That is, without question, the exact opposite of the depiction we find in Broad and Nyiszli. Yet this portrayal undoubtedly is not less incredible than those. In particular, the mountain of corpses described by Nyiszli is just as impossible as Höss's claim that physical changes were not apparent on those killed by gassing. Since prussic acid gas —and that is [195] what we are dealing with in the case of Zyklon B— causes paralysis as well as anxiety, shortness of breath, and, eventually, loss of consciousness,[446] those who were subjected to this gas would have been just as incapable of performing the strenuous actions Nyiszli describes as we are of accepting the claim in the Cracow Höss memoirs that those killed by such gas showed no signs whatsoever of convulsions.

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[444] Nyiszli, *op. cit.*, pp. 87f.; likewise also Schoenberner (*op. cit.*, pp. 251f.), where, however —as elsewhere— deviations in the text can be noted.

The swollen blue heads (in Schoenberner: "faces) are probably based on fantastic notions about hydrogen cyanide gas. One finds similar associations in other reports.

The already mentioned Böck babbles about "a bluish fog floating above a huge pile of bodies" which could still be seen after the gas chamber was opened (Kaul, *op. cit.*, p. 245; author's emphasis).

[445] *Op. cit.*, p. 166. In his autobiography as well, Höss writes (*Kommandant in Auschwitz*, p. 122): "The bodies were not at all contorted."

[446] *Der Große Brockhaus*, vol. 2 (1953), p. 157, under *Blausäure* [Prussic acid]; *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie*, vol. 2 (1967), p. 799, under *Blausäurevergiftung*.

Conclusions

We have come to the end of a bewildering hodge-podge of so-called "authentic" witness testimonies on the "death factories" of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Most of these testimonies are, to be sure, hardly mentioned today, much less quoted. By doing so, one would not only jeopardize one's credibility, but make oneself a laughing stock as well. In addition to the WRB Report, the onetime "star witness" Miklos Nyiszli —he was not infrequently represented as such in the years before the Auschwitz Trial— whose physical existence is doubtful, is as good as forgotten. Likewise, Broad is not mentioned anymore, although he is one of the few witnesses who are presumably still alive.[447] The book by Dr. Vrba —or whatever else this shady character may call himself— is scarcely to be found in libraries anymore, and even during the time of the Auschwitz Trial received little recognition.

In their time, however, all these witnesses —Vrba, in any case, as a co-author of WRB 1— had their significance. With their help, the legend was built and the attempt made to fortify it, until finally the Auschwitz Trial set the capstone, as it were. Even before that trial, however, the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss had been assigned a leading role as an "eyewitness" and that has not changed to the present. Nevertheless, we recognize that he, if one considers his various testimonies closely —or what is passed off as coming from him— is in no way a reliable or particularly credible informant. For his testimonies contain —as we have seen— not only nonsense about technical matters and contradictions to other reports, but also self-contradictions, and are therefore untrustworthy.

The most noteworthy point about the testimonies of Rudolf Höss is the fact that they have unmistakably undergone an evolution toward ever greater "exactness." Due to the treatment he received at the hands of his jailers, Höss had likely been brought to the point where he would say anything that was demanded of him. What he said depended more or less on the differing conceptions of those who sought to make him the pivotal figure in their notion of Auschwitz. Thus it is surely no coincidence that we come across the memoirs which originated in Poland. His Nuremberg inquisitors were largely or completely unaware of conditions in Auschwitz. The Soviets and their Polish henchmen were, on the other hand, in a position to bring the rumours in circulation into some kind [196] of agreement with topographical and other material facts, or, in the course of time, to alter the latter so that they would fit in with the "reports" Höss had been required to make.

Nonetheless, even the Cracow Höss memoirs, if examined with the necessary care, are not free of contradictions, absurdities, and obvious untruths. Thus they do not fulfill the requirments one has to make of testimony that is to be classed as a historical source. That this is doubly true of other "eyewitness reports" we have treated in this section goes without saying.

However, it is understandable that the memoirs Rudolf Höss allegedly composed in Cracow are today the primary or even exclusive source of "evidence" that is adduced when one is attempting to prove the allegation that masses of Jews were gassed in Auschwitz-Birkenau. For these memoirs, in the

[447] Broad, who was born in 1921, was sentenced in 1965 to four years in the penitentiary at the Auschwitz trial. I was not able to find out his present residence because I was not allowed to look at the trial records.

version prepared by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich in 1958, are one of the few written documents that are not recognizable as spurious on first sight. They contain an abundance of details, most of which correspond or could correspond to truth, while the few pages that really matter for the Auschwitz legend are so packed with detail that the uncritical reader would tend to accept them as at least in essence true.

Hence it seems necessary that we occupy ourselves in the following section more closely with the authenticity and value as testimony of this "historical source."

The Cracow Memoirs of Rudolf Höss, *Commandant of Auschwitz*

The writings which the former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss composed during his imprisonment in Cracow, or —stated more cautiously— is supposed to have composed, were submitted to the German public by the Munich Institut für Zeitgeschichte in the year 1958 as volume 5 of the series "Quellen und Darstellungen zur Zeitgeschichte" (Sources and Descriptions on Contemporary History), which in itself should illustrate the significance attributed to them. This publication, which appeared under the title *Kommandant in Auschwitz: Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen von Rudolf Hö*ss[PRL3FT=5] (Commandant at Auschwitz: Autobiographical Notes by Rudolf Höss), had an introduction and commentary by the present director of the institute, Professor Dr. Martin Broszat. According to Broszat's introduction (*op. cit.*, p. 13), this work is a "scholarly edition" of parts of an "original" being kept in the Polish Ministry of Justice in Warsaw (*op. cit.*, p. 10). Moreover, "obvious syntactical and orthographical errors as well as Höss's very idiosyncratic punctuation" were "corrected" by the editors (*op. cit.*, p. 13). Our analysis necessarily considers only this edited version of the writings.[448] It is almost

[448] According to Broszat, the entire report consists of 237 sheets written on both sides. Included are 114 sheets containing the "autobiography" of Höss, which bears the title "MeinePsyche, Werden, Leben und Erleben" [My Psyche, Development, Life, and Experiences]. Besides this, there are supposed to be 34 additional handwritten entries extant, dealing with leading figures of the Third Reich and various matters of differing scope. The editon of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte contains only the autobiography (complete, with only a few, allegedly unimportant, omissions), as well as two other writings with the titles *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz* [The Final Solution of the Jewish Question at Auschwitz] and *Der Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler*, which Höss is supposed to have written in connection with his interrogations in November 1946. (See on all of this *op. cit.*, introduction, pp. 8f.).

According to the report of a scholar of my acquaintance, who visited Auschwitz in 1976 (see p. 199 above), the complete report consists of 500 numbered pages, some of them not written on completely; however, 15 of the pages are missing. An archivist was not able to explain why the pages were missing. The number of sheets must thus be more than 237. 39 - and not 34 - separate entries were stored in numbered folders, according to my source. Did Broszat err or have the entries been increased since he saw them in 1956? On the other hand, were 15 pages "culled out"?

It is not easy to determine whether the omitted pages in the "scholarly edition" of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte were really unimportant, as Broszat claims. The last two pages of the separate report *Die Endlösung* are included in the French edition and made avaflable to me by the French university professor Dr. Robert Faurisson (University of Lyon-II). Even Broszat designates the statement made there in a footnote (see p. 167 of the German edition) as "completely misleading," without drawing any consequences for the remainder of the report. Prof. Faurisson remarks, in an accompanying letter to me, that these two pages would have "finished off" the book if Broszat had published them.

incredible with what frivolity this "historical source" was [197] presented to the public by an allegedly scholarly institute as being in every respect the authentic testimony of Rudolf Höss. To be sure, Broszat introduces the memoirs by asking whether the "writings of a man who was in charge of unimaginable mass murder could, leaving aside the sensation they would create, deserve any degree of credibility or have any significance as historical testimony" (*op. cit.*, p. 7). This question itself indicates the lack of scholarship that attended the publication of these writings —from photocopies of the alleged originals. The institute simply took for granted the truth of something for which today there is still no proof and for which these particular writings have been cited ever since as the most essential —usually the only— evidence of historical consequence: the alleged extermination of millions of Jews in the legendary gas chambers and crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau!

Naturally, there was —as we have seen— a long series of witness testimonies on the extermination of the Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau, including Höss's previous statements. However, no official document supplied any corroboration of them whatsoever. Either their incredibility was obvious from the very content of the testimony or they were so vague and imprecise that for this reason alone they could not meet the requirements of a historical source. They could, therefore, have no significance for an objective historian. The "unimaginable mass murder" was by no means an established fact of contemporary history at the time when the Höss memoirs were published, despite Broszat's suggestions to the contrary in his introduction. Thus the statement by Broszat, in another part of the introduction (*op. cit.*, p. 13), that "documents on Auschwitz and the extermination of the Jews are nothing new " is, at the very least, misleading.

If Broszat nonetheless unmistakably tries to play down the significance of the Höss memoirs, in the previously quoted statement in his introduction, and —above all— expresses doubt in regard to the credibility of a man who " was in charge of unimaginable mass murder" this can only be characterized as a psychological ploy intended to suggest to uncritical readers objectivity and conscientiousness on the part of the editors of the memoirs. For neither Broszat nor any other member of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte could have been unaware that there existed neither unobjectionable documentary proofs nor credible witness testimony for the nucleus of the Auschwitz legend —the gassing of the Jews— unless one wishes to cast doubt on the scholarly qualifications of these people. Anybody who has dealt critically with the statements of this institute knows, of course, that it is not unbiased in regard to events in the Third Reich, something its leading representatives do not even deny.[449] Broszat's effort to convey the impression of strictest objectivity on the

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Whether one can speak about a "scholarly edition" when orthographical, syntactical (mistakes in sentence structure) and punctuation mistakes were simply corrected seems dubious to me. We noticed already in the Broad Report indications of forgers who had not completely mastered the German language.

It is characteristic, by the way, of the editors concern for "scholarship" that they not only thanked Polish authorities for their support, but also thanked Herman Langbein of the International Auschwitz Committee in Vienna, whose own publications are far removed from any scholarly worth (see *op. cit.*, introduction, p. 13).

[449] See on this Sündermann, *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 17. The American historian Professor David Hoggan has pointed out that the Institut für Zeitgeschichte received financial support from the Rockefellers (see *Der Unnötige Krieg*, p. 275). If correct, that would explain a lot.

part of the editors of the Höss memoirs can thus hardly be taken seriously. In fact the rulers of the Federal Republic were probably glad to have at last, in the form of this "document" a [198] detailed contemporaneous "historical source" that supported the "desired national-educational picture of history" (Golo Mann). That was evident at least by the time of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, where Broszat, as one of the expert witnesses, principally relied on this "source" and assured the court of its authenticity. First and foremost, however, it was that member of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte whose expert witness deposition was devoted especially to the extermination of the Jews, to wit, Professor Krausnick, who relied almost exclusively on the Höss memoirs in his presentation on the Birkenau gas chambers.[450]

In his introduction to the Höss memoirs (*op. cit.*, p. 2, second paragraph), Broszat does, of course, concede —once again feigning "scholarly objectivity"— that there may exist a "certain mistrust regarding the authenticity of a document that originated in the cell of a Polish jail." Here he unquestionably strikes at the centre of the misgivings that arise concerning the memoirs. Yet he avoids probing more deeply into this matter, much less confronting the urgent questions presented by it. Thus checking whether the Höss memoirs could actually be regarded as authentic in every respect was a mere formality for the commentator Broszat. It was disposed of with a superficiality utterly incredible in a professional historian. For Broszat and his co-editors, there was from the start no doubt that every word of the Höss memoirs originated with Höss and that his account of the extermination of the Jews, in particular, was the unvarnished truth.

In essence, all that Broszat has to say about the authenticity of the memoirs is the following (about half a page of his introduction):

1. The "formal authenticity" of the memoirs is, on the basis of graphological findings" beyond doubt.

2. The genuineness of their content emerges from its "inner historical and subjective harmony."

3. This "harmony" is, at the same time, a "sure criterion" that in the case of the entire Höss memoir we are dealing with "something written voluntarily and in no way influenced or manipulated" (on all this see p. 10 of the introduction).

Concerning the above it must be remarked:

On 1.: Broszat points out that samples of Höss's handwriting from earlier times —among other things, a two-page *curriculum vitae*, dated June 19, 1936, in Höss' SS personnel file— made graphological analysis possible. Broszat does not address himself to the question whether and by whom such graphological analysis was undertaken and whether it was carried out with the "originals" on hand —which to me would seem to be absolutely necessary. In this connection, he states only that the "originals" of the memoirs are kept, with other German official documents that were left behind in Poland, in the Polish Ministry of Justice in Warsaw, and that photocopies served as the basis of the edi[199]tion prepared by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte. Broszat claims to have examined these "originals" in November of 1956 "in situ." Under what circumstances "examination" took place and how much time was allotted for it Broszat himself was not, at that time, able to undertake a sufficient

[450] *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 415ff.

graphological analysis, especially since he probably did not have the necessary expertise for this. A dependable graphological analysis could be done only by neutral handwriting experts on the basis of the "original" of the memoirs. It is quite certain that this has yet to be done, since otherwise Broszat would have reported about it and cited the opinion of the experts.

By the way, Rassinier has called attention to the fact that it would be impossible for anybody to inspect the "document" which, according to him, is in the Auschwitz Museum, unless he were a Communist[451] An Auschwitz visitor with scholarly credentials (historian) who was interested in the Höss writings confirmed this after a visit to Auschwitz in 1976. As he assured me in a letter, only after great difficulty and aided by a ruse, was he able to get a look, for about 20 minutes, at the "originals" of the memoirs, which for a short time had been in Warsaw and were now in the archives of the State Auschwitz Museum.[452] My informant also confirmed the fact, reported by Rassinier (*ibid.*), that the Höss memoirs were written in lead pencil. Broszat does not even mention this important fact. Does the explanation for this lie in the fact that the facsimile of the first page of the autobiography of Rudolf Höss reproduced as a plate between pages 24 and 25 of the German edition was obviously made from an original written in ink? Could it be that on his visit to Warsaw Broszat was also shown notes by Höss that were written in ink?

Rassinier has designated the Höss manuscript facsimile as a forgery.[453] That is possible. It seems more probable to me, however, that the facsimile shows the genuine Höss manuscript, which then was used as a model for the forged, pencil-written memoirs. It is easier to produce a forgery with pencil. In any case, it is incontestable that there are "originals" of the Höss memoirs written in ink as well as in pencil. Some photocopies of the ink version were made available to the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, while the alleged "original" memoirs written completely in pencil were kept in the archives of the Auschwitz Museum. These memoirs were and are, of course, amenable to every kind of manipulation. For example, one could erase and alter whatever might not be convenient, or even write in additional material. According to the report of my informant, there were recognizable erasures in various passages of the "original" memoirs he saw at the Auschwitz Museum. The question as to who made them must remain open.

As one can see, almost everything here is still unclear. The "formal authenticity" of the Höss memoirs, as published by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, is by no means as far beyond doubt as Broszat would have us believe.

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On 2.: With the academic-sounding gibberish about an "inner historical and subjective harmony" of the memoirs, Broszat means nothing more than

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[451] *Das Drama der Juden Europas*, pp. 54f., 59; *Was nun, Odysseus?* p. 61.

[452] Letter of January 19, 1977, in the archives of the author.

[453] Aretz, *op. cit.*, p. 47. The facsimile of Hösss handwriting in *Kommandant in Auschwitz* (*op. cit.*, p. 23) shows a Latin script, while a facsimile from a handwritten autobiography by Höss is given by Albert Wucher (*op. cit.*, p. 197) written in the German script. The date of this second biography is illegible, and evidently it is not the two-page biography of June 19, 1936 which is mentioned by Broszat (*op. cit.*, footnote 1). The superficial appearance of both manuscripts seems similar; whether they originate from the same hand could probably only be determined by a graphologist.

that they are in agreement with what is already known about the personality, private life, and career of Rudolf Höss and, above all, that they are in agreement with what has always been claimed about Auschwitz and consequently with what was wanted from Höss as well. The latter was the most important thing to the editors, as can be seen from various passages of Broszat's introduction. Now, of course, one could view this attempt to find points of agreement between the Höss memoirs and other "facts" simply in terms of the method of source criticism which has always been practised by historians and which is obviously necessary in judging the value of a historical source. Nevertheless, the facts Broszat uses here as a standard of comparison are, for their part, so questionable that the resulting proof of authenticity is downright peculiar. Broszat supports his findings essentially by claiming that many details of the Cracow memoirs were "overwhelmingly confirmed by the transcripts of the Nuremberg interrogations and Dr. Gilbert's report concerning Höss."

This comparison lacks the power to convince. Here Broszat is merely showing that he did not notice or did not wish to notice the striking contradictions between the Cracow memoirs and the Nuremberg transcripts as well as —and above all— the Höss statement of April 9, 1946, presented by Gilbert, which, significantly, he passes over in silence. Apart from this, Gilbert's notes on Höss are highly unreliable. Gilbert never took notes during his interviews with the Nuremberg defendants and witnesses, as he tells us himself (*op. cit.*, p. 9), but later wrote down what he had heard. Moreover, he was not unbiased, something that is shown by his remark that he had seen the "evidence of Nazi barbarism in places like Dachau concentration camp" (*op. cit.*, p. 9). Thus one can hardly expect from Gilbert a record of what was said to him in these conversations that is in every respect objective, least of all in the case of a man like Höss. And certainly Rassinier is not far off the mark when he asserts that Gilbert, during his visits with Höss, adroitly exploited the impending extradition of Höss to the Soviets by way of suggesting to Höss what statements it would be necessary for him to make to escape it.[454] For surely one of Gilbert's tasks as the American prison psychologist was to infiuence the defendants and witnesses under his "care" to make statements in accordance with the claims of the prosecution. The activity of the psychologist is a part of the "brainwashing" that is usually conducted during such show trials. In the Cracow jail, too, Höss was under the constant supervision of a psychiatrist.[455]

The Nuremberg IMT trial transcripts likewise cannot —as we have seen in another connection— be considered a reliable historical source or even merely a standard of comparison for other documents, as here in the case of the Höss memoirs. For the testimonies produced under [201] Nuremberg "law" contained everything but historical truth. This is the conclusion which has been reached by all objective and unbiased observers of this judicial farce.[456] We

[454] Rassinier, *Drama der Juden Europas*, p. 54.

[455] Broszat confirms this with a certain reticence in his introduction (*op. cit.*, pp. 10f.). Rawicz, as well, emphasizes the constant influence of the psychologist, Professor Batawia, on Höss. He does not see anything more to this, however, than an alleged scientific interest in the personality of the former Auschwitz commander; see *Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, pp. 16ff.

[456] See the different lectures of German and foreign scientists at the congress of the Gesellschaft für freie Publizistik of the 21st to the 23rd of May, 1976, documented in *Das Sieger-*

have already expounded on the fact that Höss, after his capture, was subjected to the most inhumane treatment and at every stage of his imprisonment placed under various kinds of pressure (see pp. 176ff. above).

After all that one can come only to the conclusion that Broszat, editor of the Höss writings, did not even at the outset undertake the source of such importance and of such obscure origin. It follows that the footnotes Broszat composed on the text of the memoirs are completely without importance so far as the alleged extermination of the Jews is concerned.

On 3.: If Broszat pretends to view the alleged "harmony" of the memoirs as a "sure criterion" of their being original and voluntary, then for a historian he has surprisingly low requirements for the concept of a "sure criterion." It would be far easier to conclude the opposite from the agreement of the Höss memoirs with the historical picture of the concentration camps that the victors introduced and sought to corroborate with their Nuremberg show trials. Incidentally, it would require a goodly portion of naïveté —if not conscious ignorance— to accept the idea that the Polish Communists gave Höss especially humane treatment and could have had no influence whatsoever on the content of his writings, or, at least, did not try to exert such an influence.

On page 147 of his autobiography, Höss writes that he "gathered that they wanted to finish me off" and there is no reason to doubt the correctness of this part of the memoirs. When Höss observes further that this intention was hindered only by the intervention of the public prosecutor's office, that demonstrates, if this statement is also accurate, that he completely failed to recognize the situation in which he found himself. And Höss, whose spirit had been broken by the treatment he received in Anglo-American custody, likewise succumbed to a tragic error when he wrote, a few lines later (if he wrote it!):

> I must admit that I had never expected such decent and considerate treatment as I received in Polish custody, once the public prosecutor had intervened.

If this was really the way things were, then only the methods of treatment of his jailers had changed. There can be no doubt whatsoever that what mattered most of all to these trained Communist inquisitors was to produce, by means of "brainwashing" a defendant who would remorsefully admit his guilt and who could be induced to make a written "confession" as is not infrequently done in the show trials for which the Communist sphere of influence is notorious.

So-called brainwashing, concerning the methods of which much empirical knowledge exists, does not require physical torture. By that time, the victim was already far removed from such primitive means of influence. They have been replaced by a slow "grilling" making use of [202] clever means of psychological influence. The kinds of psychological pressure employed are so varied and dependent on the individual circumstances that it would take us too far off our course to describe them here in any detail. In the preparatory stage, the victim is ground down by producing fear in him, allowing a long period of time to elapse before his first interrogation, and keeping him in total isolation. Then various methods are employed to convince him that he has committed a crime which has already been as good as proven. Even simulated compassion can serve as a means of making the victim pliable. And in brainwashing a

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Tribunal, Nation Europa Verlag, Coburg. The collection of quotations from contemporary critics of the Nurernberg trials is also informative (in *Mensch und Maß*, Issue 16/1977, pp. 725ff.).

psychologist is always introduced at some point in time, whose responsibility it is to break down the last resistance and, if possible, to induce the victim to make a written "confession."[457]

We have already seen that in the case of Höss there was no lack of a psychologist, who —as Broszat puts it— "promoted the idea" in Höss to "write an account of his life" (*op. cit.*, p. 10). It is conceivable that psychological methods of influence —such as threats, promises, deceptions, *etc.*— were used to force or trick Höss into writing the incriminating parts of his manuscript. There are —as we have stated— many methods of brainwashing, and the Communists, in particular, with their long and intensive experience, were masters of them.

The public prosecutor's office could have extended Höss "decent" treatment simply in order to obtain specimens of his handwriting that skilled forgers could later use as a model. In that case, Höss himself would not have to have written anything incriminating. That could have been added later without difficulty to voluntarily written memoirs, especially if they were done in pencil.

Strange to say, Broszat does not touch on all these obvious questions. He simply assumes quite uncritically that everything the memoirs contain is the voluntary, uninfluenced, and in no way later manipulated testimony of a man who normally would have had no reason to express himself at such length, especially about things that could only bring him to the gallows. Broszat interprets Höss's alleged readiness to testify in terms of the "rashly zealous conscientiousness of a man who always is ready of service to any kind of authority, who always performs his duty... and therefore is also prepared to surrender his ego —a terribly empty ego— to the court in the form of an autobiography in order to serve the cause" (*op. cit.*, p. 1). This is not very convincing. Such an abstract, valueless sense of duty does not exist. Here Broszat is attempting, for reasons that are easy to guess, to obscure, with the aid of illusory theories, the hard realities of the time and the particular situation in which Höss found himself.

Now, Höss does write at the end of his autobiography (*op. cit.*, p. 151): "These writings consist of 114 pages. I have written them voluntarily and without compulsion." However, in view of those times and conditions, that seems entirely absurd. Actually, this sentence alone is [203] enough to make an unbiased historian leery. In point of fact, nothing could better illustrate the fact that others exerted influence on these writings. After all, who would conclude a personal account of one's own life with such a formula?

Moreover, the autobiography itself furnishes evidence that it was not prepared "voluntarily" in the proper sense of the word. On page 63 of the autobiography —that is to say, in that part which basically concerns his personal development and thus may largely contain Höss's own ideas— he writes that in his present imprisonment he felt the lack of any physical work very much and was thus grateful to do the writing tasks assigned to him, which he found completely absorbing and satisfying.

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[457] On the term "Brainwashing" see *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie*, vol. 7 (1969), p. 33 [*Gehirnwäsche*]. An especially instructive description of the procedures in brainwashing is given to us by A.F. Marfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 80ff.

So Höss was not writing on his own incentive, but these writing tasks were "assigned" ("aufgegeben") to him! Of what the individual assignments consisted is not known, nor is it likely ever to be.

Broszat makes do with the arguments for the alleged authenticity of the Höss memoirs we have treated above under numbers 1 to 3; they occupy less than half a page of his fifteen-page introduction. It is hardly to be assumed that he or his co-workers undertook anything apart from this to discover their authenticity; otherwise, the reader would certainly have been informed of it. Everything else, especially the comments on the "nature and significance of the autobiographical writings of Höss" that conclude the introduction (pages 13 to 21 of the introduction) is empty verbiage and double-talk that, despite all Broszat's efforts, in creases rather than diminishes skepticism about the whole. Furthermore, notes containing source criticism are utterly lacking on the decisive pages of the memoirs, namely, the places where Höss (or a forger?) makes completely absurd allegations about the technical procedures involved in carrying out the alleged extermination actions. That is unusual for a scholarly edition. Taking all this into consideration, one can readily accept Heinrich Härtle's statement that ever since Broszat "edited and wrote the introduction to the unbelievable alleged memoirs of the "Commandant of Auschwitz" Höss, he has not been taken seriously by exacting historical scholars."[458]

In summation, it can be said that the "historians" of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte did not even begin to check the credibility of the "document" published under the auspices according to traditional methods of scholarship. Not even the formal authenticity of the alleged Höss writings in the version presented by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte can be considered certain. As a historical source, they have therefore only limited significance. Wherever they make reference to the alleged extermination of the Jews, they have no probative value, especially for the reasons mentioned in the previous section.

And so our investigation into the authenticity of the Höss writings could be closed, since the obvious lack of verification of the "historical source" by the editors basically makes any further discussion super[204]fluous. Nevertheless, I should like to direct the attention of the reader to a series of additional points from which even a layman can recognize that the Höss writings were to a large degree manipulated. Their investigation by qualified and independent experts could surely contribute numerous additional proofs of this. Of course, they will be —as in the past— prevented from conducting such an investigation, if possible.

In the first place, the question urgently arises as to why this allegedly important historical source was kept from the public for more than a decade. In his introduction to the edition published by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in 1958, Broszat reports to us that the "extraordinary nature of this source" induced the Polish "High Commission for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes in Poland" to undertake as early as 1951 the "first publication of

[458] Härtle made this statement in his report about a historical congress which he visited at the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Nuremberg Tribunal. The congress was held from March 13-15, 1975 in the auditorium of the National Archives in Washington by the "Conference Group on German Politics." Broszat also attended. See *Das Freie Forum*, newsletter of the Gesellschaft für Freie Publizistik, Issue 4/1975, pp. Iff., here p. 3.

writings by Höss, in Polish translation" and that this first, partial publication was followed by a complete publication of the writings —likewise in the Polish language— under the auspices of the Polish Ministry of Justice in Warsaw (*op. cit.*, p. 11). Nevertheless, even at that time four, five years had passed since the death of Rudolf Höss, and it strikes one as more than strange that the alleged life story of such a man was so long withheld, not to mention the fact that it was first published in a language which he himself had never spoken.

Both Polish editions were, moreover, as Broszat further reports, "known only to a few experts in Germany and Western foreign countries" and supposedly inspired the plot of a novel by a French author (*op. cit.*, pp. 11-12). One can only find that amazing. For if —as Broszat claims— experts in Germany supposedly were informed at the beginning of the 1950's that Höss had left written records at the time of his death, it is hard to understand why they did not proceed immediately to seek to establish the reliability of this important historical source. There was all the more reason to do so, since at that time there still was widespread uncertainty about the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and its alleged significance. Furthermore, Western scholars of the day certainly would have arranged translations into their own languages had they actually been informed of this extraordinary document. The Poles seem apparently not to have been interested in giving the "memoirs" much publicity, although today there are regarded as exceedingly important.

Given all these circumstances, one could get the idea that certain circles interested in promoting the Auschwitz legend were at that time still trying to lay out the framework for what was to be presented to the international public as the "confessions" of Rudolf Höss. The fact that at approximately the same time the first partial Polish translation was published the French author mentioned by Broszat wrote a novel about Höss entitled *La mort est mon métier* ("Death is My Profession") should give one pause for thought. Possibly there was some "cross-fertilization" [205] here, and the parts of the German "original" that are today regarded as particularly important were at this time first conceived and created, or adapted from passages in Höss' actual manuscript.

However that may be, one would have at the least expected some explanation from the German editors of the Höss writings as to why the editing of the (real or fictitious?) memoirs of Rudolf Höss in their original language, German, took more than a decade. The fact that this problem is not even broached is revealing enough. The withholding for no good reason of an undoubtedly remarkable document in its original text for a period of more than ten years can scarcely be reconciled with the claim that it is authentic in every respect and indeed the "most authoritative testimony" (Rawicz) on the alleged extermination of the Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Normally such a document would have been made available to authorities interested in the subject to be checked and evaluated immediately after its composition. Even the Poles avoid discussions on this subject today. For this reason, the suspicion is not unjustified that the Höss writings were not only largely the result of a skillful brainwashing, but also were later augmented or partially altered. Any other

explanation for the fact that this document appeared so late —and still not in its entirety!— is hardly conceivable.[459]

A closer look at the edition of the memoirs available to us gives this thesis a certain confirmation. One could perhaps start from the premise that the autobiography of Rudolf Höss is authentic to the extent that it reflects the personal development of Höss, his most personal ideas, convictions, and emotions, as well as all of his professional duties that were not connected with the alleged extermination of the Jews. Even for a group of forgers it would have been too troublesome and time-consuming to assemble all these details and to reduce them to writing. So, for this reason, Höss was probably ordered to write most of the autobiography himself. Moreover, in this way one could obtain an extensive sample of his handwriting, from which one could not only ascertain his penmanship, but also —and this was most important for additions and alterations— his style and vocabulary. Once this basis was obtained, it would have been easy for adept forgers to manipulate the content as desired, insofar as Höss himself was not prepared to make incriminating statements, despite the brainwashing he had undergone.

In the memoirs there are numerous indications which allow no other conclusion than that this, and nothing else, was the case. We intend to deal with them in the following pages. Beforehand we must say that our analysis in no way lays claim to completeness. For reasons of space alone, it must restrict itself to the most important and conspicuous points.

When we consider the autobiography, above all it becomes apparent that, strange to say, it describes only the alleged extermination of the Jews in the first makeshift facilities, which —as stated— were farm [206] houses converted into gas chambers. Of the crematoria and gas chambers, which were supposedly constructed later, Höss writes nothing in his autobiography. This is all the more conspicuous since Höss was commandant of Auschwitz until the end of the year 1943. The alleged beginning of the construction of the crematoria in the winter of 1942-43 and their start-up in the spring of 1943, which certainly must have been accompanied by many problems, fell during the time when he was commandant. Similarly, Höss makes repeated reference to the almost continuous typhus epidemics that raged in the Auschwitz region, which Butz views as the actual reason for the construction of the large crematoria in Birkenau.[460] Höss omits in his autobiography —if that is what it is— the most important fact in the history of the AuschwitzBirkenau camp, of which he must have had personal knowledge and which probably presented complex problems in more than one way.

The segment on the gassing of the Jews is covered in a little over nine pages of the comprehensive 42-page segment on Auschwitz in the autobiography (*op. cit.*, pp. 120-130). That is certainly a limited treatment, if

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[459] The French historian Paul Rassinier shares this opinion. He writes in *Was nun, Odysseus*?, p. 65: «In all probability Rudolf Höss wrote his confession in the death cell, and the Polish Communists here and there, and rather clumsily, added parts which accorded with the Communist statements about events in Auschwitz between 1940 and 1943...

"In any case, this is the only possible explanation for the length of time until the book was published (12 years!) and also of the internal contradictions of the work."

See also Rassinier, *Die Lüge des Odysseus* (3rd. revised edition, 1964), p. 261.

[460] Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 118 and 125ff.

the main purpose of Auschwitz-Birkenau was to exterminate all Jews within the German sphere of influence.

In contrast, Höss addresses himself at great length to the subject of the extermination of the Jews in a separate treatise, *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage im KL Auschwitz*, which he allegedly wrote several months before the autobiography, though he makes no reference to this fact in the autobiography. Here he addresses the subject of the alleged gassings and cremations in the new crematoria in Birkenau, with which we have already dealt thoroughly in the previous section. This treatise is presumably a forgery in its entirety, produced after the death of Höss. For apart from the contradictions and absurdities it contains, which we have already pointed out, it puts the kernel of the atrocity propaganda in a nutshell, so to speak. It gives the impression of being an assignment, concerned with glossing over the contradictions that accompany the legend and obscuring them, whenever possible, something which —as we say— was not always accomplished. It is significant enough that even its title makes use of the jargon and the atrocity propaganda of the victors: "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Auschwitz Concentration Camp" although there is still no documentary proof that the term "Final Solution" ever had the meaning of extermination.

The explanation for this peculiar treatment of the alleged extermination of the Jews in the Höss writings seems very simple. Höss certainly must have written a few pages in his autobiography about the epidemics raging in Auschwitz, which led to the construction of the crematoria and the problems connected with it. All that does not fit in with the legend, of course, so these pages were removed during the "editing" of the autobiography and replaced by other —forged— pages. Not everything that Höss was desired to say on the subject of the extermination of the [207] Jews could fit in these little more than 9 pages. Hence the separate treatise on the Final Solution was prepared and passed off as an earlier statement by Höss, *i.e.*, one dating back to November of 1946. However, there were no references made to this allegedly earlier treatise in the autobiography Höss completed in February of 1947, something Höss would not have failed to do had he actually written both this treatise and the passages in the autobiography on the extermination of the Jews himself.

Something that speaks for the subsequent interpolation in the autobiography of the 9-page section on the makeshift extermination of the Jews is the fact that it concludes the chapter on Auschwitz, though these events are supposed to have occurred in 1942, *i.e.*, in the middle of Höss' time as commandant. Actually, the account of the initiation of the new crematoria in the spring and summer of 1943, something of which there is —as we have said— not a word in the autobiography, should have concluded the section on Höss' time as commandant. Before this last part of the Auschwitz chapter, Höss expressly mentions the alleged extermination of the Jews in only two passages, which, by the same reasoning, were probably added or altered later.

On page 110 of the autobiography one reads the following:

> [When the Reichsführer SS modified his original extermination order of 1941, by which all Jews without exception were to be destroyed, and ordered instead that those capable of work were to be separated from the rest and employed in the armaments

> industry, Auschwitz became a Jewish camp. It was a collecting place for Jews, exceeding in scale anything previously known.*

Höss had not previously mentioned an "Extermination Order" to which this sentence could refer, so Broszat felt obliged to add a footnote referring the reader to the separate treatise on the "Final Solution." Höss presumably would have done that himself had he written this treatise and that statement. Also, the statement quoted above does not otherwise fit into the context, so that its later insertion is quite probable. Anyway, that would have been no problem since it was written in pencil. The fact that at the end of the sentence the auxiliary verb is missing, moreover, points to the fact that it must have originated with someone who did not have full command of the German language. It is not Höss's style!

We can make the same observation in another passage. On pages 105-106, Höss describes a visit by Himmler to Auschwitz in July of 1942, on which he inspected, *inter alia*, the gypsy camp with its over[208]crowded living and infirmary barracks. The following is then stated:

> He saw it all, in detail, and as it really was —and he ordered me to destroy them. Those capable of work were first to be separated from the others, as with the Jews.*

Here again the auxiliary verb is missing at the end of the sentence, a kind of grammatical sloppiness which does not appear elsewhere in Höss' writings on his life. Moreover, this sentence, like the previous statement, has no point of reference so far as the Jews are concerned. Höss does not start to speak about the Jews until page 108 of the autobiography, and even then there is no indication that they were brought to the camp in order to be liquidated.

Leaving aside these two passages, which can only have been inserted subsequently, the alleged extermination of the Jews is discussed at the end of the Auschwitz chapter of the autobiography —as already mentioned— in a discreet segment comprising about nine pages, beginning on page 120 and ending on page 130. After discussing in detail the difficult construction of the camp and its significance as a labour camp, Höss goes on to describe the individual categories of inmates and their conduct. He also has much to say of his ideas about the administration of a concentration camp and the treatment of its inmates, whereby he repeatedly emphasizes the importance of humane treatment in maintaining and promoting the e fficiency and morale of working inmates. Again and again, he complains that his purpose was to a large extent misunder stood by his subordinates, indeed, that they even tolerated the "system of terrorization that prevailed within the prison camp" namely, the torture and mistreatment of prisoners by their own prisoner hierarchy, something Rassinier, also from his own experience, graphically describes in his book *Die Lüge des Odysseus*.

When one reads it all in this way, one immediately forms the impression that Auschwitz was a gigantic human reservoir of labour for the war economy, not —as it is always portrayed— an extermination camp for Jews. This is

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*Als der RFSS seinen ursprünglichen Juden-Vernichtungsbefehl von 1941, nach dem alle Juden ausnahmslos zu vernichten waren, dahin abänderte, dass die Arbeitsfähigen für die Rüstungsindustrie heranzuziehen seien, wurde Auschwitz Judenlager, ein Judensammellager in einem Ausmass, das bis dahin nicht gekannt.

* Er sah alles genau und wirklichkeitsgetreu – und gab uns den Befehl, sie zu vernichten, nachdem die Arbeitsfähigen wie bei den Juden ausgesucht.

supported even further by a statement Höss makes on page 120, which may be considered a summary of this segment of the book:

> In accordance with the will of the Reichsführer SS the concentration camps were to become armaments plants. Everything else was to be subordinated to this.

Höss even reinforces this with several further sentences, expressing the view that this was a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of final victory: "I had implicit faith in our final victory, and I knew I must stop at nothing in my work to help us achieve this."[461]

[209]

And only now —still on the same page, 120— comes a striking break in the narrative. The following paragraph begins with a sentence that has no relation at all to the preceeding sentence:

> By the will of the Reichsführer SS, Auschwitz became the greatest human extermination centre of all time.

This is the introduction to the story of the beginning of the alleged extermination of the Jews, which leaves one with the impression of an unfinished torso interpolated into the work. In conjunction with this, Höss reports on his time as a bureau chief in the Economic Administration Head Office of the Waffen-SS in Berlin and on the end of the war.

It has already been explained that these nine pages on the extermination of the Jews must originally have had a different content and were probably inserted in place of the earlier content of these pages (see pp. 206ff above). For a complete portrayal of the alleged extermination of the Jews, the nine pages available were obviously not enough. In any case, this part of the autobiography unmistakably represents a break in continuity. That is clear from the obvious incompatibility of the two sentences quoted above, which almost directly follow each other. At the beginning of the part about the extermination of the Jews, the forger was obviously anxious to retain Höss's choice of words ("Nach dem Willen des RFSS... "). But this is exactly what makes the contradiction so particularly conspicuous and emphatic. The execution of two totally conflicting orders could hardly have been the "will" of the RFSS (Reichsführer-SS Himmler).

Later in the course of the narrative, this impression is strengthened. For what Höss says there about the extermination of the Jews and how he says it by no means proves the "authorship of the Auschwitz commandant, who was well-versed in this matter" as Broszat asserts (page 10 of the introduction). Rather,

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[461] The fact, established by many documents, that Himmler had great interest in using the Jews for labour is clear from various passages of the Höss report (see for example pp. 132, 134 and 158). This leads to many contradictions and strange passages in the (partly falsified) text, which cannot all be dealt with in detail here. The facts are presented as if the WVHA had been interested only in placing as many Jews as possible in the defence industry, while the RSHA sought the extermination of all Jews. Himmler supposedly stood midway between these two departments and could never come to a clear decision (on this see also the special report *Der Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler*, pp. 167ff. in *Kommandant in Auschwitz*). Since Himmler was in command of both departments, however, it is highly unlikely that his supposedly wavering intentions rendered him subject to either department. If ever the leadership principle was practiced anywhere to an extreme, it was within the SS. Himmler is entirely justifiably described on page 148 of the Höss report as the "crudest representative of the leadership principle." Least of all does the portrayal of Himmler's behaviour regarding the Jewish question comport with the allegation that Himmler gave Höss orders for the extermination of the Jews in the utmost secrecy. One feels for the difficulty the falsifiers had in dealing with the fact that at the end of the war hundreds of thousands of Jews were still working in the German armament industry and were evacuated - even from Auschwitz —to the Reich with other workers as the Russian army advanced.

we are dealing with nothing more than warmed-up atrocity stories of the kind that in the early post-war years were monotonously dished out to the hapless public in regard to *all* German concentration camps —indeed, still are today, as, for example, in the recent edition of Eugen Kogon's book *Der SS-Staat*. The version attributed to Höss corresponds, sometimes almost word for word, to such accounts, something which leaves no doubt as to their common origins. The style and content of this part of the autobiography makes it seem out of the question that it originated with Höss, whose account is otherwise so sober, indeed almost boring. To a certain extent, then, Rassinier is correct when he speaks of this "work" as a "collection of unverifiable gossip."[462] A few examples may help to illustrate this point.

The collection of stories ascribed to Höss includes, for example, the well-known tale about the mothers who, before entering the gas chamber, tried to hide their infants among piles of clothing, an impossible and absurd picture, which, no doubt, was calculated to affect the [210] emotions of the average reader. Victims who maintained their dignity as they entered the gas chamber and whom Höss is made to praise on that account are also not lacking: The "old man" who, before his gassing, prophesies retribution for the Germans is a stock figure in such stories (sometimes it is a woman). With regard to this story, it is always overlooked that this version contradicts the claim that the victims remained deceived, believing to the end that they were being taken to be bathed or deloused. Naturally, Höss mentions the extraction of gold teeth and the shearing of hair from the dead, as well as the rest of the particularly disgusting and enigmatic activities of the Jewish *Sonderkommandos*, who "repeatedly" came upon the "bodies of close relatives among the corpses" (*op. cit.*, p. 126). Here, too, one cannot fail to notice the shameless attempt to play on the emotions of the credulous. Naturally, again, the especially popular tale about the basting of the funeral pyres with human fat drained from them —an impossible procedure, both physically and technically— does not go unmentioned.

In this portrayal of the activity of the so-called *Sonderkommandos*, the "editors" of the Höss memoirs, to be sure, made a mistake so serious that the legend of the extermination of the Jews finishes itself off, so to speak. In describing how the men of the *Sonderkommando* dragged the corpses out of the "gas chambers" Höss is made to say: "While they dragged the corpses about, they ate or smoked" (*op. cit.*, p. 126).

This statement comes immediately after the description of the "gassing." In another passage of the memoirs, it is stated: "The door was opened half an hour after throwing in the gas, and the ventilation switched on. Work was *immediately* (My italics —W.S.) begun to remove the corpses" (*op. cit.*, p. 166).

Here we learn that —in other words— the *Sonderkommando* began its work, including, according to this account, the extraction of gold teeth and shearing the hair from the corpses of those gassed, half an hour after the induction of the gas into the chambers, and that without gas masks! For the men of the *Sonderkommando* "ate or smoked" all the while, something which obviously would not have been possible with gas masks.

And so the lie becomes evident! This story lacks every semblance of reality because it describes a proceeding that would be impossible, given the

[462] See *Das Drama der Juden Europas*, pp. 53ff., 63; *Was nun, Odysseus?*, p. 65.

way Zyklon B works. Since in this or another form it had become a standard component of the atrocity literature, it was necessary that Höss include it as well.

That it actually was utterly impossible to enter a room that was permeated with Zyklon B after so short a time without a gas mask, not to mention work in it, is proven by two documents. We are referring to technical literature from the DEGESCH company, which manufactured and sold the insecticide Zyklon B. Both documents were submitted in [211] the Nuremberg trial of employees of the IG-Farben works before the American Military Tribunal (Case 6), without, of course, the recognition that the documents revealed the absurdity of the gas chamber legend. Since then, they have "vanished without a trace" and are, significantly, no longer mentioned in the literature on the subject. I owe my knowledge of them to a tip from Dr. Robert Faurisson. I succeeded in locating and inspecting photocopies of them in the Staatsarchiv in Nuremberg. Their content must, in view of the usual accounts in the atrocity literature, be described as nothing other than sensational.

One of these documents from the DEGESCH company which contains eight lectures in the technical field with which this company was involved. Above all, it makes clear that "ventilation" in the case of Zyklon B gas is "difficult and lengthy because of the strong adhesion of the gas to surfaces" (*op. cit.*, p. 47). According to this, Zyklon B must not only have adhered for a long time to objects and permeated the fumigated areas, but would have also adhered for a rather long time to the corpses of people who had been gassed, so that any contact with such corpses would have required the wearing of a gas mask.

The other document (NI-9912) —*Richtlinien für die Anwendung von Blausäure (Zyklon) zur Ungeziefervertilgung* (Guidelines for the Use of Hydrocyanic Acid [Zyklon B] for Exterminating Vermin)— is an instruction booklet for the use of this preparation. It gives the time for ventilation after the use of Zyklon B as "at least 20 hours." Further, it is specified that in working with Zyklon B, or in rooms that have been fumigated with it, gas masks with a special filter must be worn at all times. The detailed instructions for the ventilation of fumigated rooms are to be strictly followed; in no case might they be entered again without gas masks "until 21 hours have expired after the beginning of ventilation." Accelerated ventilation is therefore impossible. In both documents, by the way, it is repeatedly emphasized that specially trained personnel are needed to handle this gas and to ventilate areas fumigated with it. Nowhere is it reported that the Jewish *Sonderkommandos* every received any special training of this kind.

In no case, then could the *Sonderkommando* have entered the "gas chambers" a half hour after the introduction of the gas and busied itself with all the tasks described in the Höss memoirs and elsewhere.

Let us direct our attention to a few more of the nonsensical statements in the autobiography and the treatise *Die Endlösung*... which underscore what has been said up to now.

According to that treatise, when Himmler issued to Höss the extermination order, he directed him to keep it "absolutely secret" even from his superiors (*op. cit.*, p. 153). Höss had already maintained this when he

testified as a witness in Nuremberg (see p. 139f above). In his autobiography, Höss is made to say the following, however (*op. cit.*, p. 128):
[212]

> The Reichsführer SS sent various high-ranking Party leaders and SS officers to Auschwitz so that they might see for themselves the process of extermination of the Jews. They were all deeply impressed by what they saw.... I was repeatedly asked how I and my men could go on watching these operations, and how we were able to stand it.

is clear from the rest of the description of the extermination of the Jews in the autobiography that numerous SS leaders and SS men, some of them mentioned by name, took part in these operations.

The obvious departures in the autobiography from the previous story that the extermination of the Jews was kept secret can only be explained by the fact that, after the execution of Höss, another trial was held before the Supreme People's Tribunal in Cracow, against a number of former members of the Auschwitz camp personnel, and in it the alleged Höss testimonies presumably played an essential role in the convictions.[463]

One more contradiction makes it clear that the autobiography was subsequently manipulated. While in the part of this memoir that is probably authentic —*i.e.*, before the beginning of his alleged description of the extermination of the Jews— Höss repeatedly emphasizes that he personally could not concern himself with anything but the construction and expansion of the camp (see, for example, pp. 93 and 119), toward the end of the Auschwitz chapter he is made to say the following (*op. cit.*, p. 128):

> I had to watch hour after hour, by day and by night, the removal and burning of the bodies, the extraction of the teeth, the cutting of the hair, the whole grisly, interminable business. I had to stand for hours on end in the ghastly stench, while the mass graves were being opened and the bodies dragged out and burned. I had to look through the peephole of the gas chambers and watch the process of death itself, because the doctors wanted me to see it. I had to do all this because I was the one to whom everyone looked, because I had to show them all that I did not merely issue the orders and make the regulations but was also prepared myself to be present at whatever task I had assigned to my subordinates.

Once again, something is being narrated that cannot be reconciled with Höss's earlier statements. If Höss actually had to attend to the alleged extermination of the Jews “day and night” as claimed here, then he would have had no time at all for what in many pages of his autobiography he previously designated as his main responsibilities.

The incredibility of the section on the extermination of the Jews, which, in my opinion, was subsequently inserted into the (genuine) autobiography, is shown by a striking inner contradiction. Namely, in it Höss mentions —as he did at Nuremberg— the repulsive stench that was allegedly caused by the extermination of the Jews. In the separate treatise *Die Endlösung* he writes that the “stench of burning flesh was borne for many miles and caused the whole neighborhood to talk about the burning of the Jews, despite official counterpropaganda” (*op.* [213] *cit.*, p. 159). From the conclusion of the Auschwitz chapter one can, however, assume that Höss's family, his wife in particular, evidently did not notice all this, even though the commandant's residence was located on the edge of the main camp. Was their olfactory sense stunted? Höss even states expressly, at the end of the chapter, that his wife

[463] The trial was conducted from November 24, 1946 to December 22, 1947 against 40 former camp personnel of Auschwitz. See *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*, p. 215, footnote 30, and p. 288.

"never understood these gloomy moods" of his (*op. cit.*, p. 130). That can only pertain to the extermination of the Jews, which had just been discussed.

Incidentally, Höss testified, as a witness in Nuremberg, that he had told his wife of the order to keep the extermination of the Jews secret after she became aware of it from remarks made by the Gauleiter of Upper Silesia at the time.[464] But how had the Gauleiter, despite the order of secrecy, heard about it? There is no end of contradictions —presumably because the legend was fed from so many different sources.

The forgers made a crude blunder when they had Höss make the distinction between "German" and "Upper Silesian" Jews. In the treatise *Die Endlösung*... (*op. cit.*, p. 158), one can read the following:

> Originally all the Jews transported to Auschwitz on the authority of Eichmann's office were, in accordance with orders of the Reichsführer SS, to be destroyed without exception. This also applied to the Jews from Upper Silesia, but on the arrival of the first transports of German Jews the order was given that all those who were able-bodied... were to be... employed in war work.

Likewise, in the statistical table on page 162 *op. cit.*, the Jews from Up per Silesia and those from Germany are enumerated separately. Certainly Höss would not have expressed himself in this way, since for him Upper Silesia was undoubtedly part of Germany; he was a participant in the Freikorps battles in Upper Silesia after the end of the First World War.[465] Hence this distinction points indubitably to Polish authors, who would, of course, consider Upper Silesia not German but Polish territory.

Finally, we are grateful that Broszat draws our attention to a remarkable fact. In footnote 1 on page 40 of the autobiography, he states that SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Fritzsch —first commander of the protective custody camp at Auschwitz until 1941— was transferred at the insistence of Höss "on the grounds of incompetence." Fritzsch, however, was the SS leader who, according to Höss' alleged account in the autobiography (*op. cit.*, p. 122) and in the treatise *Die Endlösung*[... (*op. cit.*, p. 155), first employed Zyklon B to exterminate human beings, "on his own initiative" and therefore "invented" it, so to speak. Earlier —as emerges from the Höss memoirs— a method that could be used for mass extermination had long been searched for in vain (*op. cit.*, pp. 122-123 and 154-155). This makes clear once again the incredibility of the whole gassing story. How could the most capable subordinate officer —so far as the planned extermination of the Jews was concerned— be dismissed "on the grounds of incompetence?" Furthermore, because of the alleged order of secrecy in regard to the mass murders, somebody like Fritsch logically would have had to be kept at the Auschwitz camp. In accounts of this kind, however, logic often enough comes to grief, as we have already noted a number of times.

In closing, let it be noted that Höss, in many passages of his autobiography, shows himself to have been a sensitive and thoroughly humane camp commandant, who often strongly complains about the crude methods of his subordinates and their lack of understanding in the matter of raising the morale of the worker inmates, and who, above all, re jects and does not tolerate the mistreatment and torture of prisoners —no matter who is responsible for it.

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[464] IMT XI, 441.

[465] See Broszat's footnote on p. 34 of *Kommandant in Auschwitz*. The same follows from the autobiography of Rudolf Höss published by Albert Wucher (*op. cit.*, p. 197) in facsimile.

At the end of the autobiography, that thought is summarized in the following sentences (*op. cit.*, p. 149):

> In these pages, and also in my sketches of the leading personalities concerned, I have sufficiently explained how the horrors of the concentration camps could come about. I for my part never sanctioned them. I myself never maltreated a prisoner, far less killed one. Nor have I ever tolerated maltreatment by my subordinates. When during the course of this investigation I have had to listen to the descriptions of the fearful tortures that were carried out in Auschwitz and in other camps as well, my blood runs cold. I knew very well that prisoners in Auschwitz were ill-treated by the SS, by their civilian employers, and not least of all by their fellow prisoners. I used every means at my disposal to stop this. But I could not.

A man who had not only been present at the extermination of millions of people, but even given detailed orders for and supervised such an operation, would not talk this way. These statements in no sense complement the wordy and imaginative descriptions of the extermination of the Jews that also are supposed to have originated with him, but they do harmonize with the remaining content of his autobiography, and could therefore be genuine. They leave the impression that here a man who felt himself to be completely innocent was writing something in his own defence. Compared to the alleged gassings, as depicted elsewhere in the memoirs, the things he mentions here seem of no great consequence. Höss certainly would not have wasted any words about them had he been the mass murderer he is continually made out to be.

Naturally, Broszat recognizes that conflicting images of Höss's personality crop up all through these writings, and so he makes quite an effort to explain them psychologically. Yet one is not convinced when he opines that "mass murder need not be coupled with personal cruelty, with diabolical sadism, brutal coarseness, and so-called beastliness" (page 14 of the introduction), and then continues (*op. cit.*, pp. 14-15):

> Höss's writings refute these all too simple portrayals radically, and reveal instead a portrait of a man who was responsible for the daily conduct of the extermination of the Jews and a person who is everything is quite average, by no means malicious, but, on the contrary, very orderly, reliable, an animal lover and a nature lover, yes, and in his way "inwardly" inclined to be, and indeed, expressly, "moral". Höss is, in a word, the outstanding example that such "qualities" are no assurance against one's becoming inhuman, but can be perverted and placed in the service of political crime.

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Finally, Broszat tries to explain the alleged dichotomy in the mental life of Höss in terms of "robot-like performance of duty"(page 16 of the introduction), of ``utter subordination'' (page 17 of the introduction), or of the alleged "general perversion of the emotions and moral concepts" (page 18 of the introduction) in the Third Reich. The irreconcilable opposites in the Cracow Höss writings cannot be talked away with such generalities. The mutually exclusive modes of conduct of the Auschwitz commandant and the image of split-personality connected with them, as revealed in his autobiography, in the form we receive it, allow a single explanation: either one side of the coin or the other is false. Part of the memoirs were forged or Höss was coerced into writing it — or Höss, for some reason, did not always write the truth.

For reasons that are not very clear, Rawicz assumes the latter. He believes that one should not unreservedly accept what Höss writes about himself. On the other hand, Rawicz naturally accepts unreservedly everything that Höss writes about the extermination of the Jews.[466] This might be arguable

[466] Introduction, pp. 18ff., to *KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS*.

if that part of the writings were free of contradictions, technical impossibilities, and sundry other offenses to common sense. But since — as we have seen — there can be no thought of this, Rawicz's view is far off the mark. In any event, Höss could have, even though he knew better, been prepared to "confess" in his memoirs to the extermination of the Jews in order to avoid further tortures at the hands of his jailers. All the contradictions, the technical nonsense, and the other absurdities could, in this case, have been written by him so as to make the incredibility of the whole story obvious to later historians. For a number of reasons, however, I do not consider that probable.

As was emphasized at the beginning, this analysis of the Höss writings in no way claims to be complete or conclusive. One point, in particular, that was only touched upon before (see p. 198 above, under "**On 1"**) cannot be pursued here: the question of what "original" versions of the Höss writings exist and to what extent they di[S4]er. When one compares the quotations from the French version of the Höss writings that appear in Rassinier's works — especially in *Das Drama der Juden Europas* — there seem to be a number of differences between the French and German versions that cannot be traced back simply to free translation.[467] Hence it is not out of the question that the French and German versions were each based on a different "original". Here one should remember the fact that the "original" kept today in the Polish Auschwitz Museum was written in pencil, while the edition published under the auspices of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, which is the basis for our analysis, was derived from a manuscript at least partially written in ink. One must also remember that differing versions of the reports of other "eyewitnesses" on the alleged extermination of the Jews — for example, Nyiszli and Gerstein — were put into circulation. Thus it would be by no means [216] unusual if different versions of the Höss memoirs existed.

As Rassinier wrote,[468]] it looks like there are many fine days ahead for the historians!

[467] Professor Faurisson of the University of Lyon-II, who studied both versions, speaks in a letter to me dated March 30, 1977, of "innumerable" differences between the German and French versions! The letter is in this author's archives.

[468] *Das Drama der Juden Europas*, p. 55.

Chapter Four

The Auschwitz Trial

Legal Proceedings as a Source of Material for Historians: Fact and Fiction

WHEN THE EVIDENCE in the Auschwitz Trial had been presented and the defence and prosecution were delivering their summations, one could glimpse an unavoidable and telling flaw in the none too meticulously fabricated public image of these proceedings as an "ordinary criminal trial."[469] With ill-concealed smugness, Accessory Prosecutor Henry Ormond declared at the end of his summation:

> If the survivors of the hell of Auschwitz could no longer bear witness -and certain circles are waiting for just that - then Auschwitz would become nothing more than a legend in a short time. Were it not for this trial, in which the truth was heard out of the mouths of the survivors, those who refuse to learn would have continued their attempts to minimize. That this is no longer possible is, next to the punishment of the guilty, the lasting achievement of this exemplary trial.[470]

This statement amounted to an exposé of the Auschwitz Trial. Yet, even at the outset, an impartial observer of these proceedings would have received the impression that they were designed primarily, if not exclusively, for the purpose of giving a judicial stamp of approval, as it were, to a still widely disputed view of an episode in recent history.

Now that a member of the clique behind this travesty of justice was openly proclaiming its main purpose, it does not come as a surprise that the prominent defence attorney Dr. Hans Laternser, in his plea for Dr. Capesius, unequivocally condemned this function of the Auschwitz Trial as beyond the proper authority of a court of law.[471] In his summation, delivered on August 6, 1965, Dr. Laternser even went so far as to speak of these proceedings as a "show trial," a view other members of the defence had apparently expressed

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[469] The presiding judge in the Auschwitz Trial, judge Hofmeyer, stated specifically in his oral opinion that it was an "ordinary criminal proceeding." He indeed thought it necessary to substantiate this extensively. Nothing could have made it clearer that everything was not "normal» in this trial; otherwise there would have been no reason for this explanation. Compare Bernd Naumann, op. cit., pp. 274ff.

Rückerl also takes special trouble in bis book, NS-Prozesse, to present these trials purely as proceedings against criminal activities, and to justify them as such: op. cit., pp. 13ff.; see also ibid. the contribution of Artzt, pp. 163ff.

[470] Quoted after Bernd Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 254.

[471] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

earlier.[472] However strange this charge may seem within the general context of German jurisprudence, we shall see that in this case it is not so far-fetched.

Accessory Prosecutor Onrmond was not the only person to announce the purpose of the Auschwitz Trial. Hermann Langbein, Secretary General [218] of the International Auschwitz Committee, who, in addition to serving as a witness, was a constant observer of the trial, and had been instrumental in putting it together, expressed similar views in his two-volume collection of documents on the trial.[473]

Describing the Auschwitz Trial as a "documentation of Hitler's largest extermination camp against which nobody could have any logical objections," Langbein goes on to claim that it will "serve future historians, and, above all, give the younger generation in Germany food for thought and enable them to orient themselves in the right direction." He concludes with an admission that is remarkable for one of the men behind the Auschwitz Trial:

> To serve this purpose to the utmost, the picture of the Auschwitz extermination camp had to be put together under the direction of German jurists.

Likewise, Robert M.W. Kempner, the former Nuremberg Trial prosecutor, cited as the authority for his recent charge that the "extermination of the Jews" was implemented by "planned administrative teamwork on the part of all State and Party agencies" not any independent post-war historical research but "evidence and testimony in German courts," and he specifically mentioned the "Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt."[474]

Throughout the proceedings, it was quite obvious that their main purpose was to define a period in recent history, and, at present, the desired result has by and large been achieved. In the long run, however, this attempt will prove to have been a failure. Scholars will have the final say about what goes into the history books as definitive historical knowledge. Myths seldom attain to the rank of historical fact, and the picture of Auschwitz that emerged from the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial was essentially based on a myth, the most important constituents of which we have discussed in previous chapters. Conscientiously truthful scholars will certainly not take it as their point of departure. One day there will be historians who are free of the dogma of our times, and therefore dispassionate and unbiased. No doubt they will shake their heads in astonishment or disgust when they see how unscrupulously "documents" were used and what kind of nonsensical, contradictory "testimony" was admitted in the Auschwitz Trial. Despite the most careful editing, Hermann Langbein failed to eliminate contradictions and discrepancies from the material in his collection of trial documents.

The objectivity that will some day make serious historical scholars question the basis and results of the Auschwitz Trial and similar proceedings is, of course, not to be expected from the "official" historians of our time, especially those who are affiliated with institutions. If they questioned the Auschwitz legend, they would be placing their jobs in jeopardy. At least insofar as this subject is concerned, the right to free speech has its limits. This

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[472] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

[473] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 907f. Langbein emphasizes, in his introduction to volume 1 (*op. cit.*, p. 9ff.), the "strong political significance" of the NSG (Nationalsozialistische Gewaltverbrechen) [Nazi Crimes of Violence] Trials.

[474] In an article published in the Jewish newspaper *Der Aufbau* (New York) of November 14, 1975, entitled "*Vor dreißig Jähren in Nürnberg*" (p. 6).

observation applies not only to German scholars on both sides of the Brandenburg Gate, but even to historians [219] in other countries. The French historian Paul Rassinier and, more recently, the American university professor Dr. Arthur R. Butz learned by experience that violating this taboo entails considerable risk.[475] Hence the British scholar at the University of London who wrote *Did Six Million Really Die?* elected to publish his work under the pseudonym "Richard Harwood." The whole situation was nicely summed up by the American historian whose anonymous work was published in 1969 under the title *The Myth of the Six Million*. In the introduction it was noted that the book had to be published anonymously because the author intended to keep his position as a college professor until he could collect his hard-earned pension.[476]

Thus historians who wish to be "taken seriously" avoid treating the subject of the "extermination of the Jews," or else simply embellish the picture drawn at the Nuremberg Trials, which, in turn, was largely modelled on war propaganda. In the latter case, all they can do is try to lend a bit of plausibility to the old clichés by incorporating into the prescribed design such novel details as can be gleaned from the Ekes of the Auschwitz Trial. A good example of this approach is Arndt and Scheffier's essay "Organisierter Massenmord an Juden in Nationalsozialistischen Vernichtungslagern" [Organized Mass Murder of Jews in National Socialist Extermination Camps].[477] Although the authors make the very sound observation that "responsible historiography cannot be based solely on judicial decisions," they do not adhere to this principle themselves: their treatment of Auschwitz is based largely on the decision of the Frankfurt Assize Court and —what amounts to the same thing — on the memoirs Rudolf Höss allegedly wrote while imprisoned in Cracow, which the judges did not hesitate to admit in evidence (along with some equally dubious witness testimony), even though they had seen only photographs of the document.

Broszat's introductory note to Arndt and Scheffier's treatise also betrays the fact that the authors are merely paying lip service to this idea. He asserts that the "Judiciary in the Federal Republic, with its large and experienced investigative apparatus, has made a greater contribution to shedding light on National Socialist crimes and criminality, especially in regard to the extermination camps, than any historians could make." But he really gives away the whole show when he remarks later on that he expects the forthcoming

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[475] Rassinier had to endure personal attacks and a long trial in France after the publication of his book, *Le Mensonge d'Ulysse* [The Lie of Odysseus], until he was finally assured the right to freedom of opinion by the Court of Appeals in Lyon.

Prof. Butz's position as professor at an American university seemed endangered for some time. He was heavily attacked by the Jewish press in America. According to the *Deutsche National-Zeitung* of May 13, 1977, there was even an arson attempt against him, in which, however, he was not injured.

[476] *Op. cit.*, pp. 3-4. It is thought that the "Anonymous" conceals a well-known American professor who wished to remain unknown because he was worried about his position as a college professor.

[477] *Op. cit.*, pp. 105-135. This article is identical (with minor deviations) to the supplement in the weekly newspaper Das Parlament (B 19/76 of May 8, 1976) pubhshed by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, which was the subject of my study *Historiker oder Propagandisten?* (booklet 2 of the series *Zur Aussprache*, published by the Deutsche Arbeitskreis Witten under the title *Das Institut für Zeitgeschichte- eine Schttindelfirma?*).

publication of the main results of such legal proceedings to refute the findings of the Revisionists "in regard to the extermination camps."[478]

What a declaration of intellectual bankruptcy! Here the Director of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, an outfit that specializes in the history of the Third Reich, is admitting the extent to which historians concerned with proving the extermination thesis feel they must depend on the results of judicial proceedings against "Nazi criminals" (the so-called Nazi Crimes of Violence trials). Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this confes[220]sion is that it so boldly contradicts the generally accepted view that determining the facts of history is the business of scholars, not jurists. Even the judges in the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials usually called attention to this point, and summoned "experts" to provide the criteria for judging the historical background in the case. For lack of knowledge, they trusted implicitly the presentations of these experts, most of whom were —as Broszat very well knows— members of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte. *Difficile est satiram non scribere*.¨ [479]

Since the judiciary has been made into the character witness, as it were, for what is passed off as "knowledge" about the "extermination of the Jews," it is necessary that we examine briefly the dominant epistemological methods of both historical scholarship and penal jurisprudence. Each of these fields has a different working method. Nobody with any common sense could expect jurists in a penal case to be able to arrive at a definitive explanation of a historical event, quite apart from the fact that a trial has other purposes to serve.

The method historical scholars employ to reconstruct events basically consists in researching, comparing, criticizing, and evaluating sources. A synoptic presentation of a historical event that is faithful to reality can result only when the historian has sorted out, appraised, and compared every available source-written documents, contemporaneous accounts, material remains, and so forth-taking into account any other relevant information. This task requires much time, and often special expertise. It could never be accomplished by a court in a penal trial.

In the field of recent German history, it is sometimes no easy matter to do the source research that is so obviously indispensable to genuine historiography. After the fall of the Third Reich, the German archives were plundered by the Allies. Even today, most of these captured documents, which the victors used to fabricate the indictments in their show trials against Germans, have not been returned. In many cases, one cannot even determine their whereabouts. No conscientious and responsible historian would undertake a study of such a grave matter as the alleged extermination of the Jews without examining the relevant original documents. Of course, it is precisely those documents which are being withheld today. Up to now, this material has been gone over solely with a view to incriminating Germany. Only by accident have exonerating documents been made public.

As we have said it is incumbent upon the historian to assess, compare, and criticize all relevant source materials he has obtained. One may reproach contemporary historians for not maintaining any real critical distance vis-a-vis

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[478] *Op. cit.*, p. 112. Oddly enough Broszat does not mention the "extermination camp" Auschwitz in this connection.

¨ "It is hard not to write satire" - Juvenal

[479] See on this my study mentioned in footnote 9 above.

their source material. For it is above all in the field of recent history that the researcher is liable to encounter forged material. Thus he can never dispense with critical evaluation of the form and content of his sources. One finds hardly a trace of such critical [221] distance in the literature on the "extermination of the Jews," even though —as in the case of the Höss memoirs— some writers create the impression that they have misgivings about the authenticity of certain sources. Leaving aside the forgery problem, most of the known sources on the "extermination of the Jews" admit of varying interpretations. As Dr. Butz has persuasively argued, almost every particular detail of this legend has a dual meaning, that is to say, one can interpret according to the legend things that are quite commonplace and innocuous, if one is so inclined.[480]

In approaching any source, it is not enough to ask: "is it really what it purports to be?" Often one must also ask: "Am I reading into it what I should like to believe it says?" To answer these questions requires extensive investigation, comparison, and, sometimes, complex mental operations as well. If one neglects to ask these questions, which apply to every part of a given source, the only possible outcome is deception or error.

A synoptic presentation of a historical event can emerge only from the kind of methodical research of which we have given a very simplified description here.[481] Only after the historian has completed such research and evaluation may he give his personal views, and then only within certain limits. In the "new" Germany, however, historians are accustomed to proceed in exactly the opposite fashion when focusing on the subject of the Third Reich. They subordinate the selection and interpretation of their sources to preconceived ideas, taken over from the "war crimes trials" of the Allied victors. Their approach is simply alien to sound historical scholarship.

Even if they attempted to employ the method described above, judges in a penal trial could not reach any definite conclusions about a historical event. For that they lack both the time and the training. Moreover, their task is *fundamentally* different from that of the historian. It is simply to determine whether the defendant is innocent or guilty of a legally punishable offence, and, if guilty, impose the sentence prescribed by law. In reaching a verdict, they need consider only facts which are relevant, according to the usually quite strict definitions of penal law, to the case they must adjudicate, and are obliged to follow the principle in *dubio pro reo*, which means: in case of doubt, decide in favour of the accused. In other words, judges in a penal trial do not have to pronounce on matters that cannot be cleared up on the basis of legally admissible evidence, whereas a historian dealing with some episode in history is obliged to pursue his inquiries until he has arrived at what he believes to be a complete and accurate picture of events. Thus it is utterly absurd to say that the findings of some court represent "secure knowledge of recent history," as do those members of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte who look above all to judicial decisions for confirmation of their views —something that in itself ought to make one wary of these "contemporary historians."
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[480] Butz, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-132.

[481] On the methodology of historical scholarship see the standard work of Ernst Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode*, Munich-Leipzig, 1914.

In a criminal proceeding, the facts of the case are determined by evidence presented to the court in the manner specified in the Rules of Judicial Procedure in Penal Cases (the *Strafprozeßordnung*, "StPO" for short).[482] Even if the defendant has pleaded guilty, the court is not bound by his admission of guilt but must continue to examine the evidence. In hearing evidence, the court is concerned only with such facts and proofs as are relevant to the case before it (5 244, Para. 2 StPO). Of course, it may sometimes be necessary to clarify the background of a crime, for example, to determine the motive of the culprit — which is an important factor in passing sentence. But the specific criminal act is always what matters most, not some historical issue. In the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials, this principle has frequently been ignored, especially with respect to the hearing of witnesses and consultants. Assertions about a historical event made in a trial must not be regarded as though they were the definitive conclusions of historical scholarship. The time allotted a trial is not usually sufficient to permit a thorough investigation of a historical event, using the method described above, nor do jurists ordinarily possess the requisite training to conduct such an inquiry.[483]

That is why judges call on experts when it seems necessary to clarify some historical matter. According to the SWO, the depositions of experts are evidence. This judicial practice attests to the fact that the courts have not yet taken over the job of the historians. Nevertheless, our "new" German historians persist in basing their work to a considerable extent on the decisions of the very courts before which they were called to testify as "experts." The notion that German courts have uncovered "definite information" about the implementation and scope of the "extermination of the Jews" in the Third Reich can be traced largely to the claims of these "contemporary historians."

One more point needs to be made here. As Arndt and Scheffler have noted in their essay "Organisierter Massenmord an Juden in nationalsozialistischen Vernichtungslagern" (see page 219 above), the courts do not have at their disposal any material evidence whatever on the alleged extermination of the Jews.[484] Although in some of the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials, on-the-spot investigations have been undertaken - as in the Auschwitz Trial -these visits to the "scene of the crime" contributed nothing to an objective clarification of the legal issues, and, more particularly, nothing to the clarification of the historical background, real or alleged, in any of these cases.

As we have said, court proceedings necessarily fail when it comes to determining historical truth, since trials have another purpose to serve and the judicial *modus operandi* does not lend itself to historical inquiry. But these are not the only reasons. In such trials, all involved-the defendant or defendants, the defence counsel, the prosecuting attorneys, and, last but not least, the judges —have conflicting interests. There is no way all participants could cooperate to arrive at a determina[223]tion of historical truth. If anything, their activity necessarily lends itself to distortion of the facts of history. So far as determining the historical background of a given crime is concerned, the

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[482] Method in penal cases can only be outlined here. For a clearer orientation, see the pertinent literature on the subject, such as Prof. Eberhard Schmidt's commentary on judicial procedure in criminal cases and on the GVG (*Gerichtsverfassungsgesetz*).

[483] This will be more thoroughly substantiated below, "The Auschwitz Trial-A Show Trial,"p. 229ff.

[484] See the collected findings of Walendy in *Methoden der Umerziehung*, pp. 32f.

court can at best arrive only at a kind of *ad hoc* historical verisimilitude, basically relevant to that case alone. From such trials, the historian may, of course, obtain some bits of information, which he must assess very carefully, using other sources as his criterion. Were he to accept offhand as "secure knowledge" the total historical picture constructed in a "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trial, he would be placing his reputation for scholarship in jeopardy. For none of the participants in those trials are really concerned with ascertaining historical facts. They all have their personal interests or professional duties in mind, and those interests can only hinder the quest for historical truth.

Naturally, the defendant in any penal trial is eager to be acquitted, or, at least, to come away with the most lenient sentence possible. If he is guilty, he will seek to attain this end by making denials and false statements. Culprits who feel remorse over their misdeeds and confess to them are a rarity in the history of criminology. Seldom does truth play even a subordinate role in the statements of guilty defendants.

But even if the defendant is actually innocent, he will not always stick to the truth. Particularly when certain pieces of circumstantial evidence speak against him, he may think it necessary to bolster his story with a phoney alibi or other false information.

On the other hand, there are, as everybody with any practical experience in criminal law knows, numerous cases in which a demonstrably innocent person accuses himself of wrongdoing, for any number of reasons.[485] Article 54 of the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* of 1532, the very first German penal code, prescribes that the judge shall question the accused about such circumstances of which an innocent person could know nothing.[486] Although this provision may owe its existence to the fact that back then confessions were frequently extracted by torture, its inclusion in the Imperial book of law is still highly significant. Psychological considerations alone prompted Carl Joseph Anton Mittermaier, one of the leading professors of penal jurisprudence of his time, to demand that all confessions be verified. In his book *Die Lehre vom Beweise im deutschen Strafprozeß*, [The Rules of Evidence in German Criminal Procedure], published over 150 years ago, he stated:

> In attempting to determine the whole truth by means of rational inquiry, one will seek additional proof of the veracity of the confession. Not only must the facts of the confession be proved independently, but it must also be shown that the person who has made the confession is familiar with circumstances surrounding the crime of which an innocent person could have no knowledge.[487]

Today it is an undisputed tenet of forensic psychology that confessions are not always rendered with the whole truth in mind. In the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials, the judges did not pay much heed to this prin[224]ciple. As a rule, they accepted at face value every statement of the accused that fit into the prescribed pattern, almost with a sigh of relief, and never gave the question of truth a second thought.

In the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials, the defendants' view of the historical background of the case counted for nothing, even if they were found innocent. Thus they had less incentive to insist on the truth —so far as it was

[485] Hellwig is especially instructive on this point (*op. cit.*, pp. 50ff.).
[486] Hellwig, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
[487] Quoted after Hellwig, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

known to them —than merely to say what was expected of them. (Perhaps such conduct is just an expression of human nature. Some of the defendants in the Allies'post-war trials acted no differently.)[488] From the outset, the defendants in the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials knew that it was utterly pointless to dispute all or part of the picture of the "mass murder of the Jews" in which they were accused of having taken part, since that picture had been inculcated into the public mind long before the trials began. To the defendants it must have seemed the most expedient course not to dispute that the alleged murders occurred, only that they were involved in them. Particularly if they lacked an airtight alibi, the defendants had to secure the goodwill of the court. In short, they had but one aim in mind: their own acquittal.

Without doubt, they were simply acting in accordance with the advice of their attorneys, who, of course, were interested in basically the same thing as the defendants. Every defence attorney naturally strives to secure an acquittal for his client, or, at least, to obtain for him the lightest possible sentence. To do so he must not only present whatever facts may exonerate the accused, but also win the favour of the judges and even to some extent of the prosecution. Above all, he tries to avoid doing anything that might antagonize these decision makers of the judicial system. According to Dr. Laternser, at least one defence attorney in the Auschwitz Trial induced his client, against his own better judgement, to make a partial admission of guilt in order to "meet the court halfway."[489] This attorney's action was an utterly inexcusable dereliction of duty, and it may even have been a violation of professional ethics. The only possible explanation for such conduct is that the attorney himself must have been secretly convinced of his client's guilt. It goes without saying that no defence attorney can, for the reasons previously stated, fundamentally challenge the alleged historical background in a "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trial. What is more, some of the defence attorneys in these cases are actually believers in the extermination legend. They plan their courtroom strategy accordingly, and try to get their clients to go along with it. There are exceptions to this attitude and approach, of course, but, as always, the exception merely serves to confirm the general rule.

On the whole, the defence attorneys in the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials have never shown the slightest interest in establishing historical truth. Indeed, they are under no obligation to help elucidate even the historical background of the specific crimes of which their clients have [225] been accused. They may and therefore do limit themselves simply to presenting whatever facts they believe are most beneficial and least detrimental to their case. Any evidence presented in court they will consider exclusively from this standpoint. It is a matter of complete indifference to them what relation

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[488] Among others, the commanders Ziereis (Mauthausen), Kramer (Bergen-Belsen) and Suhren (Ravensbrück) admitted in their "confessions" that there were gas chambers in the camps they commanded. It has been irrefutably established that this was not the case. The newspaper *Hannoversche Presse* reported in its Feb. 4, 1947 edition on the trial staged by the British against SS personnel of the Ravensbrück Camp: "Even the accused admitted, almost without exception, that they had known about the existence of gas chambers." The women's camp of Ravensbrück was, according to the findings of the International Red Cross, a very well-furnished and-led camp, in which a delegate sent there by the committee in April found not a trace of a "gas chamber." See the Red Cross Report, pp. 114f.

[489] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

historical events may actually have to the alleged crime so long as they can cast enough doubt on the personal involvement of their clients to get them acquitted according, to the judicial principle *in dubio pro reo*. Although this approach only serves to obscure the historical facts, taking the path of least resistance is often the most effective defence strategy in these cases. It is certainly the most common.

Likewise, the prosecution has interests of its own. Naturally, it should be concerned first and foremost with arriving at the truth, just as the court is supposed to be, and this is indeed what German penal law requires. Our prosecuting attorneys are fond of hearing themselves described as the "most objective officials in the world," and, in fact, under §160, Para. 2 of the StPO, the prosecution is constrained to inquire not only into those facts and circumstances which tend to incriminate the defendant, but also those which may exonerate him. The popular view that the prosecution aims solely at securing the conviction of the accused is generally incorrect. Of course, "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials have their own peculiar set of rules, as anyone who has attended such a trial will tell you.

There are several reasons for this state of affairs. For one thing, even prosecuting attorneys are not altogether free of the preconceived ideas regarding recent history that have been drummed into the German public by decades of propaganda. This in itself is sufficient to induce bias against individual defendants in "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials. For another, one should not overlook the fact that a prosecuting attorney is a civil servant who is subject to orders from his superiors, consequently dependent on the reigning political forces in the state. Their position on these matters requires little comment. They batten on the continuing diabolization of the régime which the Allied occupation allowed them to succeed. The passage of decades has changed nothing in this regard. Quite rightly, many prosecutors in the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials are convinced that a promotion could depend on the number of "Nazi criminals" they helped convict. That may be why they have taken so few pains to discover and bring to bear evidence that tends to exonerate the defendants, even though the law requires them to do so. In every one of these politically inspired trials, the version of the historical background that was set down by the men behind the scenes has met with the unqualified acceptance of the prosecution.

This brings us to a feature of the legal system that is peculiar to the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials. We are speaking of the Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufiddrung nationalsozialistischer [226] Verbrechen (Central Office of the Regional Judiciary for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes —called the "Central Office" for short). This agency was established in autumn 1958 at Ludwigsburg on the decision of a conference of regional ministers of justice and put in action on December 1, 1958. It is difficult to place the Central Office within the administrative structure of the Federal Republic of Germany. According to the first head of this agency, Chief Prosecuting Attorney Adalbert Rückerl, its task is to conduct comprehensive and systematic investigations of "Nazi Crimes of Violence," *i.e.*, brutalities and murders allegedly committed in the concentration camps and during commando (*Einsatzgruppen*) operations.[490] Created as a result of strong

[490] *NS-Prozesse*, p. 21.

political pressures, the Central Office does not rest on any firm legal foundation either with respect to its existence as an institution or its functions.[491] The very character of this special office of public prosecutions thus insures that the investigations into these alleged crimes will be pursued in a totally one-sided manner, something that is fairly obvious from Dr. Rückerl's own book, *NS-Prozesse*.

Here we should note first of all that the "documentary material" from which the staff of the Central Office concocts the "material grounds" for "Nazi Crimes of Violence" indictments comes primarily from archives —a better term would be *forgery-factories*— in the Eastern Bloc states.[492] The Central Office has also developed a "lively working relationship" —to use Rückerl's phrase— with "responsible agencies" of other western countries and "last but not least, Israel." Functionaries of the Central Office have undertaken numerous trips to these countries in their search for incriminating documents.[493] It is worth noting, too, that one of these employees smugly boasted that he discovered an "important piece of evidence" right in the city of Ludwigsburg: the 42-volume record of the Nuremberg IMT Trial, copies of which the occupation forces "generously distributed throughout the German judiciary, including the lower courts."[494] We have discussed this document several times before in the present volume.

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[491] It would lead too far afield to deal in this connection with the predominantly political motives which in the 50's led to a renewed and systematic persecution of so-called Nazi criminals. Naturally these are not mentioned by Rückerl in his explanation of the reasons for establishing the Central Office. It is to be noted, however, that under political pressure, the governmental branches of the Federal Republic of Germany declared themselves willing to disregard existing law in order to enable the further prosecution of alleged National Socialist crimes.

Rückerl himself indicated that the Central Office was established because "the jurisdictional constraints of the local prosecuting authorities and courts were a hindrance to the systematic investigations of the crimes" (*op. cit.*, p. 21). An especially good example of the "constitutional" convictions of those who were supposed to have been appointed to preserve the constitution.

Since the laws decreed under the Occupation for National Socialist crimes (especially Law Nr. 10 of the Control Council) were no longer in force, the renewed hunt being hypocritically presented as called for by German criminal law, the statutes of limitation had to be manipulated." Many acts allegedly committed during the war, especially by the SS, threatened to come under the statutes of limitation before the investigations were concluded. On March 25, 1965, the West German Bundestag passed a special law which decreed that for so-called National Socialist Crimes the term provided for under the statute of limitations should start from January 1, 1950. This completely arbitrary postponement of the beginning of the statute of limitations was not only arbirary in its fixing of the date; it was arbitrary in that it dealt only with so-called National Socialist murders, and not with "normal" murders.

Above all it was a violation of the constitutional principle of equality (Article 3 of the Basic Law). Because of its *ex post facto* nature, the law also offended against the constitutional principle of "*nulla poena sine lege*" (no punishment without law) which is expressed in Article 103, Paragraph 2 of the Basic Law (compare also Section 2 of the German Federal Constitution). This became even more apparent when the West German Bundestag in 1969 again manipulated the statute of limitations retroactively by lengthening the statute of limitations for National Socialist crimes from 20 to 30 years. With this, the pursuit was "secured" until the year 1980 and further, because under special circumstances interruption of the 30-year time limit is possible by judicial action.

See on all this Rückerl (*op. cit.*, pp. 21-24), who does not even mention the legal issues arising in the prosecution of so-called NS crimes.

[492] Rückerl, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[493] Rückerl, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[494] Blank in *NS-Prozesse*, p. 46.

In its search for incriminating material, the Central Office relies almost entirely on those forces which are ideologically and financially interested in pinning on the German people as many crimes as possible against other nations, particularly Jewry. The Central Office acknowledges that the published work of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and the Yad Vashem Museum and Library in Jerusalem have been of great help to it.[495] Thus it should come as no surprise that Rückerl attempts to justify the Nuremberg Trials in his book *NS-Prozesse*.[496] In line with this attitude, the Central Office basically operates according to the methods developed by the prosecution in the old Allied "war crimes trials." just as back then the occupation forces carried out the greatest manhunt in history as a result of charges made in war propaganda,[497] so the prosecutors of the Central Office began [227] their inquiries by searching through the relevant published works. They then conducted a systematic investigation of all surviving former members of the Reich agencies mentioned in connection with "crimes" in these works.[498] By 1965, the Central Office had about 200 investigators at its disposal for this manhunt. They were assigned to the task on a fulltime basis, and assembled in a special office.[499] (In the meantime, more sleuths have doubtless been assigned to the Central Office. With such a waste of law enforcement personnel, no wonder the number of unsolved crimes is on the rise!) After "clarification of the essential facts," the case is handed over to prosecutors within the proper jurisdiction, and they naturally feel obligated to respect the findings of the preliminary investigation. That is to say, as far as the Central Office is concerned, legal jurisdiction is a secondary matter in the proceedings it initiates.[500] For someone to come under suspicion of having committed a "Nazi Crime of Violence" it is quite enough that he once belonged to an organization or governmental agency mentioned in some piece of atrocity literature. Once a person has been named as a "Nazi Criminal," "witnesses" can always be found who will swear under oath they are "positively certain" that he was responsible for the murder of at least a few thousand Jews. If necessary, the investigators will show the "witnesses" photographs of the suspect to refresh their memories, which are, however, almost invariably immune to the ravages of time.[501]

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[495] Blank in *NS-Prozesse*, p. 57.

[496] Especially by Artzt in his contribution "Zur Abgrenzung von Kriegsverbrechen und NS-Verbrechen" *NS-Prozesse*, pp. 163ff.

[497] See Heydecker/Leeb, *Der Nürnberger Prozeß*, p. 11

[498] Evidently the alleged 'National Socialist Crimes» which appear in the tendentious literature, the trial records and "documents of Nuremberg," the reports of foreign "committees," etc., are never doubted in the least. In any case there is —in the Rückerl book as well— no indication of any doubt. For the Central Office these are simply indisputable facts"; the hunt for the "culprits" is the only problem. This corresponds exactly to the procedure at Nuremberg, as stated in Article 21 of the London Agreement of August 8, 1945: "Tribunal shall not require proof of facts of common knowledge, but shall take judicial notice thereof."

[499] Rückerl, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[500] Rückerl, *op. cit.*, pp. 21, 25f. See also Blank in *NS-Prozesse*, pp. 43ff.

[501] I am in possession of a photocopy of a comprehensive letter (No. 24 AR 1/62 [Z]) which the director of the North Rhine-Westphalian Chief Prosecutor's Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Mass Crimes in Concentration Camps in Cologne sent to all potential witnesses in his investigation concerning the concentration camp Sachsenhausen. The whole thing goes on for more than 100 pages and is an instructive example of how the accusations against the SS personnel of Sachsenhausen were "managed." It offers an excellent instance of the procedures of the Central Office and other departments cooperating with it. In the letter, which was signed by the prosecutor, Dr. Gierlich, it is indicated to the addressee that preliminary investigations of the SS personnel who

In his book *NS-Prozesse*, Rückerl repeatedly expresses the idea that it was absolutely necessary for the prosecutors of the Central Office to devote themselves to the study of contemporary history, since "particularly in evaluating a Nazi crime... the deed... must be viewed in its historical context."[502] The kind of thing to which this leads becomes evident when one reads the article Chief Prosecutor Manfred Blank contributed to Rückerl's volume. Among other things, Blank relates a description of the "gas chambers of Treblinka" from the verdict of the Düsseldorf Assizes. According to this description, which apparently goes back to the "findings" of the Central Office, there were "6 to 10 rooms" of this kind, "each measuring approximately 8 x 4 x 2 meters" and each with a "capacity of 400 to 700 persons."[503] The startling "exactness" of this description is itself a cause for suspicion. Of course, it is so mathematically improbable that one imagines the Central Office functionaries who made it — and the judges who copied them— must have flunked grammar school

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were stationed at Sachsenhausen were to be conducted "with expert advice by the Sachsenhausen Committee" (!). The addressee is then asked to give information about his experiences "in the sense of this letter" (page 1). Extensive fists of names are enclosed with the letter. Regarding this, on page 4 of this letter it is stated: "The names of the persons about whom I seek information are found in Appendices III, IV, V, and VI. Who of these took part in the crimes committed in Sachsenhausen? Should you know the names of additional SS personnel whom you could accuse of concrete crimes, please give me this information as well..."

It goes on to say on page 5: "In the picture section - page 99ff. - you will find photographs of persons sought; unfortunately pictures of all of them could not be obtained; in part the pictures originate from a time when the accused were not yet or no longer present in the camp, in part the pictures are recent."

As if that weren't enough, on pages 7ff. it is thoroughly explained what kind of mass crimes are under consideration, so the witness not need trouble himself about that. One need only choose from a selection which contains the following references:

"Murders on the arrival of the first big transports of Jews in 1938."

"Killing of the Jehova's Witness August Dickmann, who was shot on the parade ground September 15, 1939."

"Shooting of 33 Poles on November 9, 1940.

"Shooting of Russian prisoners of war at the execution grounds in autumn 1941."

'Who took part in the gassing of Russian prisoners in gas wagons?"

"Gassing of prisoners. Who installed the facilities?"etc.

These data were probably compiled by the aforementioned "Sachsenhausen Committee." It is especially interesting that here the "gassings" resurface. Although the Institut für Zeitgeschichte had established by August 1960 that there had been no "gassings" in the concentration camps of the Old Reich —therefore not in Sachsenhausen-the attorneys at the Central Office evidently still subscribed to this wartime propaganda He in the years which followed. The preliminary investigations for the Sachsenhausen Trial lasted from 1962 to 1970.

In conclusion, the addressee is informed that only "murder; attempted murder; complicity in and preparation of murder; poisoning with resultant death; knowingly acquiescing in the above-mentioned crimes by superiors" were unaffected under the statute of limitations and could still be prosecuted. Nevertheless, other accusations would be thankfully acknowledged. Chief Prosecutor Dr. Gieräch writes: "It is necessary to clarify instances of mistreatment —even if not in every detail— because one might draw conclusions about states of mind in murder committed in some other circumstances. There is also the possibility that through mention of additional circumstances an instance of mistreatment is revealed as an attempted murder." (p. 11)

Thus the door is opened for settling personal scores through every conceivable lie. The "state of mind" of the chief prosecuting attorney needs no explanation.

It should not be overlooked that by far the majority of prisoners in the German concentration camps were common criminals. Dr. Scheidl puts the number at 80 percent (*Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 3, p. 32)! The "quality" of these "witnesses" who were asked by German prosecutors for help in "preserving the law" needs no commentary.

[502] Rückerl, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[503] *NS-Prozesse*, pp. 47f.

arithmetic. If one squeezed even the minimum of 400 persons into a room that had a surface area of 32 square meters and was 2 meters high, there would be about 13 people to each square meter —an utter impossibility. Here we could cite similar instances of nonsensical and erroneous conclusions in the work of the Central Office, but let us leave it at this.

Considering the *modus operandi* and ideological orientation of the investigative bureau which supplies the prosecution in individual "Nazi [228] Crimes of Violence" trials with the "material grounds" to support their accusations, it would be simply unrealistic to assume that prosecuting attorneys in such a trial could make a worthwhile or even relevant contribution to elucidating the historical background of the case. And as we noted above, these attorneys, subject to orders from their superiors as they are, would hardly feel themselves impelled to do so. They are quite content to rely exclusively on the material with which the Central Office has supplied them.

The task of the judges in "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials is —or should be— solely to establish whether the deed of which the defendant is accused bears the earmarks of a legally punishable offence, and, if he is found guilty, to mete out the prescribed sentence. It is definitely not their task to investigate and establish the whole historical background of a case. As we examine the Auschwitz Trial more closely, we shall see that judges do not always observe this rule. But again, it would be unrealistic to suppose that the judges in these trials, despite their constitutionally guaranteed independence, could simply cast aside the version of "historical truth" ordained by the Central Office and supported by scores of "experts" and "witnesses." After all, judges are only human. As a group, members of the judiciary are just as reluctant as other people to risk their jobs and chances for promotion on a matter of principle. What is more, they are just as likely to be wearing intellectual blinders. Members of the judiciary have not been immune to forty years of propaganda designed to bring a whole epoch in German history into disrepute.

From everything we have noted here it should be obvious that penal trials are by their very nature unsuited for determining the facts of historical incidents and events, least of all such politically oriented proceedings as the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials. In those trials, the prosecution, subject to orders from above as it is, cannot concern itself with historical truth, but must uphold a "political truth," which the defence and the accused, if they have any instinct for self-preservation, will refrain from challenging. Moreover, the judges are, for a variety of reasons, "pre-programmed" to accept only one view of recent history, though they are usually careful to keep within the bounds of correct judicial procedure. Consequently, one cannot expect any conclusions about historical issues that would be of value to scholars to emerge from such trials. On the contrary, the "historical background" and the probable validity of the charges against the defendants have been decided long before the beginning of the trial —in no small measure through the efforts of the mass media.[504] To the extent that "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials really are "ordinary criminal trials," this "historical background" merely serves to emphasize the

[504] This well-known fact needs no further demonstration. Nevertheless it should be pointed out once again that numerous witnesses in the Auschwitz Trial, for example, were allowed to speak over public radio before the trials began. The accused in the Auschwitz Trial were, from the very beginning, presented in the mass media as monsters in human form."

exceptional moral depravity of the alleged crimes of the accused. At bottom, however, these are politically inspired proceedings held largely for the purpose of presenting an "official" view of recent history to a still doubting public, and, perhaps, [229] too, of providing "contemporary historians" with "evidence" they would be unable to come up with on their own. As such, they come very close to being "show trials," in which the defendants are simply a means to an end.

A "show trial" may be defined as a judicial proceeding which is intended to have some politically demonstrative effect on the public at large. Ordinarily, this term is used in connection with the political purges in the Soviet Union during the 1920's and 1930's. But it would be a mistake to assume that such trials occur exclusively under the Communist system, as is often done. Nor is the elimination of persons who have fallen out of favours with the régime the only purpose a show trial can serve. An additional purpose - even the main purpose - of a show trial may be to intimidate the population or influence its thinking in a particular direction. Very often, though not always, the "confessions" of the defendants bear every sign of having been extracted by torture or brainwashing. However, the essential characteristic of a show trial is that political objectives quite alien to law and justice are being pursued by means of a highly publicized judicial proceeding that has the semblance of legitimacy. Such trials have occurred from time immemorial and under every kind of governmental system. The "war crimes trials" the Western Allies held in conquered Germany are proof that "democratic" governments are no slouches when it comes to staging show trials.[505]

The statements quoted at the beginning of this chapter would seem to confirm the suspicion that the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial was conceived from the start as nothing but a show trial. There is not much point in debating whether the judges and prosecutors were secretly aware that it was a show trial or sincerely believed that it was an "ordinary criminal trial." In fact, it is quite possible that they were unknowingly used to serve illegitimate ends. Be that as it may, the crucial question remains: Did the Auschwitz Trial have the characteristics and effects of a show trial? If the answer to it is affirmative, the "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trials in general, and the Auschwitz Trial in particular, are utterly worthless as sources of historical information.

In the next section, we shall examine more closely the conduct of this trial and draw some conclusions from it.

The Auschwitz Trial -A Show Trial?

The Background

The almost uniquely significant judicial proceeding known as the Auschwitz Trial began with an incident that borders on the trivial. On March 1, 1958, a onetime Auschwitz inmate named Adolf Rögner, who was then

[505] For the term "show trial" see *Der Große Brockhaus*, vol. 10 (1956), p. 332, and *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie*, vol. 16, p. 582. Interesting is the fact that the *Große Brockhaus* and others gave "some denazification tribunals and war-crime trials" after 1945 as examples of show trials. This apparently caused displeasure in certain places. In any event, in later editions of the *Brockhaus* encyclopedia similar references are missing. From that one can gather how thoroughly "opinion forming" is controlled in West Germany.

incarcerated in Bruchsal Prison, filed charges against the former SS-Oberscharfiihrer Friedrich Wilhelm Boger for allegedly com[230]mitting "crimes against humanity" at the Auschwitz concentration camp. According to Bernd Naumann's account, Rögner was being held in pre-trial custody. Angry that prison authorities had confiscated a shipment of medication prescribed for him, Rögner sent a complaint to the Public Prosecutor's Office in Stuttgart, and along with it his denunciation of Boger.[506] Langbein, however, describes the informer as a "convict" rather than simply a prisoner, in his "documentary" volume *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*. He does not mention exactly how the charges against Boger came to be made; he merely states that the Auschwitz Trial began purely "by chance."[507]

Both stories are quite implausible. In point of fact, Rögner's denunciation of Boger, which was destined to have consequences extending far beyond the Auschwitz Trial itself, did not result from Rögner's annoyance over the confiscation of his drugs, nor was this curtain-raising episode "pure chance." There is reason to believe that Rögner's action was a gambit devised by behind-the-scenes forces which, for a variety of reasons, had a vested interest in continuing and expanding the prosecution of "Nazi Crimes of Violence."

From Rögner's denunciation - as described by Langbein - it is obvious that organized interests were behind this whole affair. The denunciation Rögner made contains information that a single person, let alone somebody locked up in jail, would be hard pressed to collect. For example, Rögner claims that in 1946 Boger escaped from a "convoy" of prisoners assembled at "War Crimes Camp 29, Dachau," for "extradition to Poland," and hid out at Unterrath near Schwäbisch Hall until 1948. He even gives Boger's current residence and place of work. And, perhaps in an attempt to explain why he was filing charges so late in the game, Rögner opens his denunciation with the statement: Ich habe nunmehr folgendes in Erfahrung gebracht" (I have just learned the following.).

This statement, in particular, confirms the suspicion that Rögner had backers who induced him to file charges. A prisoner, whether being held for questioning or serving out a sentence, would hardly be in a position to make inquiries about the background and present whereabouts of another person, even if he did not have other things to worry about.

The possible identity of these backers is also evident from Rögner's denunciation. As sources of proof for his charges he mentions the International Auschwitz Committee in Vienna, the Central Board of Jews in Düsseldorf-Benrath, and, finally, the Auschwitz Museum Archives in Poland. It is unlikely that this petty criminal would ever have heard of any of these groups unless they contacted him first, either singly or together. In all probability, "Secretary General" Langbein —that is how Rögner refers to him— of the International Auschwitz Committee was most instrumental in this affair. We do know that Langbein soon emerged as one of the leading strategists in the preparations for, as well as the staging of, the Auschwitz Trial. At any rate, Rögner sent a copy of [231] his formal allegations to the International Auschwitz Committee.[508] That the three groups mentioned above were acting under the direction of some

[506] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[507] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 21.
[508] See on all this once again Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 21f.

higher Jewish organization is, by the way, entirely within the realm of possibility. International Jewry has many arms.[509]

Thus Rögner was simply being used by behind-the-scenes forces which were trying to revive the persecution of former National Socialists, a witch-hunt that had steadily been losing momentum in the 1950's.[510] He cannot possibly have acted on his own initiative. For one thing, his denunciation of Boger, taken as a whole, shows that he had no knowledge of any other particular crimes committed at Auschwitz, where he was allegedly imprisoned from May 6, 1941 to January 16, 1945, presumably as a habitual criminal. His accusations against Boger are themselves totally vague and wholly unsubstantiated. That may be why Rögner-who is mentioned in Langbein's volume, by the way, only under the initials "AR." —is not cited in any of the literature on Auschwitz or the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial as a witness to any specific crimes at the camp.

The reason that those who were interested in prolonging the "Nazi" witchhunt took this course of action is fairly obvious. After the occupation forces were done with their "war crimes trials," which at least in part were carried out with the most inhuman methods, the German people soon lost interest in charges about the alleged "Nazi" atrocities. Most Germans really did not believe in them, anyhow. At the very least, they were sceptical about the purported extent of the "extermination of the Jews." Revelations of the cruelties perpetrated against Germans interned in Allied camps, the barbaric "punishments" imposed for "crimes" that had never been proved, and, last but not least, the "denazification" tribunals over which "Germans" presided and which reached into almost every German home —all these things produced a high degree of bitterness among the population at large, even awakened sympathy for the victims of the rancorous "justice" of the Allies.[511] As time went on, "antinazi" witchhunting became more and more unpopular. People had seen and heard enough. They were simply fed up with the whole business. By the end of the 1950's, when it turned out that the "gas chambers" the Allies exhibited after the war never existed in Germany during the Third Reich, at Dachau or any other camp, people began to voice their opposition to Chancellor Adenauer's program of financial "reparations" to Israel.[512]

It must have this latter circumstance, above all, which alarmed those who were profiting, and wanted to continue profiting, from our national prostration and the myth of the six million. It looked as though the German people could not be politically and financially blackmailed much longer. New methods had to be devised to keep the racket going. No doubt enemies of Germany, above all international Jewry, knew they had to take prompt action. [232]

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[509] The *Allgemeine jüdische Wochenzeitung* of December 16, 1977, reported with satisfaction on the influential role the World Jewish Congress has played in the preparations for the "war crimes" trials. On this see also the *Deutsche National Zeitung* of December 30, 1977, p. 3.

[510] See on this Rückerl, *NS-Prozesse*, pp. 19f., as well as the graphic description on page 18 of the Bundestag document IV/3124 (Report of the Bundesminister of justice to the President of the Bundestag in regard to the prosecution of National Socialist criminal acts).

[511] According to Rückerl (*op. cit.*, p. 19) the military courts of the three occupied western zones gave death sentences in 806 cases; 486 death sentences were carried out. These figures seem, if anything, too low. No figures are known to me for death sentences in the Soviet-occupied area.

[512] On the foundations and extent of "Reparations," see Scheidl, *Der Staat Israel und die deutsche Wiedergutmachung*.

Given the almost proverbial German respect for authority, an obvious solution was to use the German judicial system in a massive effort to revive our national guilt complex. In the past, German authorities had not found much occasion to initiate prosecution of "Nazi crimes." The courts handled mostly cases in which individuals preferred charges against individuals. These trials generally received no more and no less publicity than any other criminal proceedings.[513] Moreover, so long as the Allied occupation forces took it upon themselves to hold "war crimes trials," the jurisdiction of German courts was restricted to offences that occurred within the territory of the former Reich.[514] After it became obvious that no "Nazi crimes" worth mentioning were committed there, those who had a vested interest in using "war crimes" allegations to keep the German people subservient realized they must try to focus public attention on atrocities Germans supposedly committed in Eastern Europe and Russia during the war. Also, they had come to realize that the usual atrocity propaganda, which had largely been exposed as fraudulent, was no longer sufficient for their purposes. But the judgements of German courts, for which the mass of Germans had unlimited respect —so they shrewdly calculated—would penetrate deeply into the national mind. Judicial decisions along the same lines as their atrocity propaganda could be used to banish, once and for all, the lingering doubts about whether he "gassing" of the Jews and similar inhumanities actually occurred.

Nor could it have been "pure chance" that the judicial machinery was geared up for this purpose in 1958. For it was exactly around this time that the grounds of the former concentration camp at Auschwitz were being opened for visitors, the very camp that was now to become the focal point of the extermination legend. At this time, too, the Institut für Zeitgeschichte brought out its "scholarly edition" of the memoirs Rudolf Höss allegedly wrote in a Cracow prison. This volume was particularly helpful in creating bias among German judges and prosecutors, who, with their modest knowledge of recent history, dared not question the credibility of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, many of whose members held the rank of full professor. Thus the stage was set for a new witchhunt.

One question remains to be answered. Why did the stage managers of his show choose for their curtain raiser a man who had repeatedly been convicted of crimes and to whose accusations the authorities presumably would pay little attention? Surely, they could have found a more "credible" accuser, or even have filed the charges themselves. As one would expect, the matter was at first treated with great caution by he Public Prosecutor's Office, and hardly anything came of it.

But it seems that was part of the plan. To understand why, one merely has to picture what would have happened had the Public Prosecutor's Office taken Rögner's charges seriously from the outset. The result would have been an ordinary criminal trial before a court within [233] the proper jurisdiction, if upon further investigation his charges had been found to be valid. Perhaps

[513] A further degree of notoriety was attained by the so-called Ulm *Einsatzgruppen* trial, which in its importance and its size can scareely be compared with the NSG trials. During this trial, several SS people were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for participation in the alleged "murder" of several thousand Jews in the German-Lithuanian border area.

[514] Rückerl, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

Boger would have been convicted of mistreating or even killing a few Auschwitz prisoners. But the trial would have received hardly more than local publicity. Undoubtedly, nothing like the huge Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, with its worldwide impact and all its far-reaching implications, would ever have come to pass. And what the promoters of the revived witchhunt were apparently seeking was an extensive, centrally directed, and highly publicized "Nazi Crimes of Violence" trial that would lead to a series of "extermination camp" trials. That alone could serve the purpose of hammering into the minds of the largest possible number of Germans, of every social stratum, the notion that the German nation was guilty of uniquely monstrous atrocities, and thus enable the foreign blackmailers to continue, perhaps even expand, their political and financial extortion racket. Had they picked an intrinsically credible accuser, his charges might have received only the usual treatment, and that is exactly why they avoided doing so. They had much larger objectives in mind.

For similar reasons, they rejected the course of taking legal action that would put the Auschwitz camp collectively, as it were, on trial, as they could have done by having some outfit like the International Auschwitz Committee make charges. That might have resulted in the enormous trial they were seeking, but the stage-managers would also have drawn the attention of the public to themselves, and, one may assume, would have provoked a defensive reaction on the part of the German people. Such a trial would have had much less credibility than one the German authorities had apparently initiated on their own.

In order to attain their objectives, they had to proceed in a somewhat roundabout fashion. Obviously, without a concerted effort on the part of interested organizations, it would have been virtually impossible to gear up the German legal apparatus for an extensive, centralized prosecution of "Nazi Crimes of Violence." By using a front man in the initial stage of the operation, these organizations managed to avoid drawing public attention to themselves. Moreover, the natural reluctance of German prosecutors to act on charges made by a convict gave the International Auschwitz Committee and other non-German forces an opportunity to insinuate themselves into the investigative process, unbeknown to the public-as though "by chance"-and to expand the investigation of Rögner's charges into the basis for a judicial spectacle. In his book *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, Hermann Langbein, the Secretary General of the International Auschwitz Committee, reveals how adroitly he and his organization managed to do this. Although Langbein's smug and verbose account does not disclose every aspect of this operation, for instance, how political pressure was employed, it tells quite enough.[515] One thing is certain: Langbein contributed mightily to the establishment of the "Central Office" in 1958. His efforts to expedite the processing of [234] Rögner's charges brought him into contact with various representatives of the German legal system, including officials of the Federal Ministry of Justice, and he used this opportunity to play up the "inefficiency" and "inadequate background" of local prosecutors for their supposed "investigative tasks." Indeed, the most important thing these alien intriguers achieved with the Rögner gambit may be the centralization of pre-trial inquiries into "Nazi Crimes of Violence" and the progressive co-ordination of an such investigative work under the extra-legal

[515] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 22ff.

Central Office. At any rate, they were satisfied that they had now accomplished what they set out to do. Langbein was exhilarated over the new judicial atmosphere: "Ein anderer Ton, ein neuer Geist!" ("A change of tune, a new spirit!")[516]

Exactly according to the plan of the promoters of this revived witchhunt, the investigation was soon extended to include all of the surviving Auschwitz camp personnel. After Boger was arrested, on October 8, 1958 —he was never to draw a free breath again-the "intimate collabouration" between the Central Office and the International Auschwitz Committee resulted in a wave of arrests, starting in April of 1959.[517] Rögner had played his part well, and exited the stage.

One tricky problem remained to be solved: How could all the cases involving crimes allegedly committed at Auschwitz be consolidated into a single trial? Separate trials of former SS members, even more or less important ones, for specific crimes before courts having jurisdiction in each particular case would not have had the desired effect on the public. In order to establish Auschwitz in the public mind as the symbol of the extermination of millions of Jews, the "official" version of what happened at the camp had to be presented in a mammoth trial before one court and endorsed in its final verdict. Only thus could the gruesome picture of Auschwitz that these venomous propaganda artists had worked for years to create obtain widespread, uniform publicity and receive the finishing touch of judicial notice, which is what it needed to be accepted as "incontestably true" by the public at large and even groups that had hitherto been sceptical of the extermination thesis. At first, it seemed this would pose some difficulties. The accused had to be indicted by prosecutors and arraigned before courts having jurisdiction over the localities in which they lived. The Central Office was responsible only for the preliminary investigations (see p. 226 above). It had no legal jurisdiction of its own, nor could it serve as the basis of a new judicature.

Once again, "chance" came to the rescue of the initiators of the Auschwitz Trial-at least, that is what Langbein tells us. It seems that the Chief Public Prosecutor of the State of Hesse, Fritz Bauer, a Jewish émigré who returned to Germany after the war, happened one day upon a "package of signed documents" concerning the "murder" of Auschwitz inmates. He is said to have turned these papers over to the Federal Court of Appeal, which thereupon designated Frankfurt as the place of jurisdiction for all offenses related to Auschwitz. A journalist purportedly [235] "discovered" these documents "by chance" in the Frankfurt apartment of a certain Emil Wulkan. Now, that seems pretty odd, but odder still is the story Wulkan served up to the authorities about the origin of the "documents." He explained that these papers, allegedly Auschwitz camp files containing the names of prisoners slain there and those of the SS men who took part in the slayings, came from the Lessing Lodge in Breslau, where a good friend of his found them in early May 1945.[518]

All this is pretty incredible. Assuming for a moment that the documents are genuine, one searches in vain for an explanation of how they found their way from the files of the Auschwitz camp to a Masonic lodge in Breslau. But we

[516] Langbein, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[517] See the survey in Bernd Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 14f. and Langbein, *op. cit.*, pp. 29f.
[518] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 30f.; Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

shall let this matter pass. A far more important question is whether the sudden appearance of these Auschwitz "documents" in Frankfurt was really the decisive factor in the Federal Court of Appeal's ruling that the whole Auschwitz case be placed under the jurisdiction of the Frankfurt courts. One could not answer this question definitely without inspecting and verifying these "documents." Of course, the Rules of Judicial Procedure in Penal Cases (the StPO) does contain a provision that cases involving connected offenses may be brought together under common jurisdiction, even in the pre-trial inquiry state. Supposedly, in this "practicality" is the foremost consideration.[519] However, leaving aside the question whether such a judicial monstrosity as the Auschwitz Trial was in any way "practical," one may dispute whether the diverse crimes of which the defendants were accused —individual murders committed in various ways, summary executions, "euthanasia" by means of lethal injections ("Abspritzen"), and complicity of whatever kind in the alleged "gas chamber" murders— constituted "connected offenses" in the sense that term is used in the Rules of Judicial Procedure in Penal Cases. For according to §3 of the StPO, such a connection exists only when either one person is accused of having committed several punishable offences (known in German legalese as "Tatmehrheit"; plurality of offences) or when several persons are accused of having committed or been accessory to one punishable offense ("Tätermehrheit"; plurality of offenders).[520] The mere fact that "documents" concerning Auschwitz were "discovered" in Frankfurt thus could not have been the decisive factor in the assignment of jurisdiction.

All things considered, it could not be too far off the track to say that the assignment of jurisdiction was less the result of legal considerations than of the Auschwitz Trial promoters' desire —manifested to the authorities in some clandestine manner— for a trial of the largest possible dimensions. The "chance" discovery of some rather obscure documents in Frankfurt was a legally dubious foundation for the assignment of jurisdiction. The tall tale about the "documents" was probably concocted just to pull the wool over the eyes of the public.

Using these thoroughly devious methods, the promoters of the Auschwitz Trial managed to get all the investigations into the Auschwitz [236] case combined into a single inquiry, with the veteran "Nazi hunter" Chief Public

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[519] Löwe-Rosenberg, *Strafprozeßordnung*, 22nd edition, footnote 1, 3 to Section 13 STPO.

[520] Regarding the problems which arise from a trial of this magnitude, Laternser, in his book *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß* correctly remarks, among other things, the following: "A court which consists of three professional and six lay judges cannot deliberate in the limited time allowed (whether four or ten days makes no difference) with the requisite care, when it is confronted with the mass of evidence compiled in an investigation which lasted 20 months. What the prosecution presented for judgement exceeds human capability. The court found itself in an inextricable predicament, thereby endangering justice in an obvious way... How could... judges still remember the details of the questionings of 350 witnesses, which went back as far as one and a half years, so as to reach a judgement which could possibly destroy a fife! The court could not even recall the individual witness personally, aside from a few exceptions, not to mention the details of his testimony, whether, for example, he appeared sure or unsure, which would preclude its evaluation, etc." (*op. cit.*, pp. 12f). Taking into account these aspects alone, the amassing of so much material for a single trial must be characterized as highly inappropriate because it impairs judgement instead of promoting it (in the case of the Auschwitz trial, this heaping up of evidence, testimony, etc. was in terms of the court's jurisdiction not only unnecessary, but indeed questionable). Such a superfluity of material would seem desirable only for those staging show trials.

Prosecutor Fritz Bauer heading it. Further investigations were then pursued to the fullest "in close cooperation with the International Auschwitz Committee."[521] Two prosecutors were made available exclusively for this purpose. The names of more and more former SS members cropped up, and the scope of the case kept on widening. A flood of "incriminating evidence" streamed from the International Auschwitz Committee and other interested parties. The prosecuting attorneys wasted little time pondering whether this material was genuine —at least, that is the impression one gets from Adalbert Rückerl's book *NS-Prozesse*, a "report on the activities" of the Central Office at Ludwigsburg. There is no reason to suppose that the Frankfurt prosecutors were more meticulous than their colleagues in the Central Office, who, after all, boasted greater expertise in this field. In addition to supplying the authorities with "documents," the International Auschwitz Committee also put them in touch with "witnesses" —as Langbein proudly reports— from countries with which the Federal Republic of Germany at that time had no diplomatic relations. Moreover, Langbein arranged for the prosecuting attorneys and examining magistrates to take trips to Auschwitz, so that they could "familiarize themselves with the place" and study "documentary evidence."

How intensively and effectively the International Auschwitz Committee and its General Secretary Hermann Langbein supported the investigation is shown by a letter from Chief Prosecutor Wolf of the Central Office to Hermann Langbein, dated December 12, 1959. In this communication, Wolf expresses "thanks and recognition... for the vigorous and valuable assistance." To quote the letter verbatim:

> During the preparations for the extensive trial relative to the unexplained crimes of Auschwitz, you have greatly alleviated our difficult and responsibility-laden task by providing us with important evidential material and by interviewing numerous witnesses in this and other countries.
>
> We understand the concern and apprehensions of the survivors, and hear the warning voices of the millions of mute victims in whose name you speak. We will make every effort to discover all the anonymous murderers we can and give them their just punishment.[522]

Perhaps the most significant thing about this obsequious and pompous letter is that it shows the "servants of justice" had already made up their minds that Auschwitz claimed "millions of victims." It nicely illustrates the prejudicial attitudes of the examining magistrates in this case, especially since it correctly refers to the "crimes of Auschwitz" as "unexplained" —a Freudian slip, perhaps? With a clarity that could hardly be excelled, it shows just who was in control of the Auschwitz proceedings. In reviewing the background of the Auschwitz Trial, we must not neglect one further point: the treatment of the defendants during the pre-trial investigation. Almost every one of them was remanded in [237] custody after his arrest, even though the lawful reasons for detention - risk of flight or danger of prejudicing the course of justice - were absent in each case. For how, in the case of these criminal charges going back for more than ten years in the past, could this clearing up of the alleged "crimes" possibly be "prejudiced"- i.e., jeopardized-by the accused? Anyway, most of the defendants were SS small-fry who held only minor positions in the administrative hierarchy of the camp. Risk of flight was even less of a

[521] See on the following, Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 31ff.
[522] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 31f.

possibility. Not only did all the defendants earn their living in the Federal Republic of Germany, but they were also of an age at which the mental and physical prerequisites for escape are minimal or no longer exist. Indeed, the charges against them were so fantastic that it must hardly have seemed necessary to avoid facing them.

The only possible explanation for the imprisonment of nearly all the defendants is that one wanted to "soften them up," mainly in order to get them to admit that an "extermination program" had been in effect at Auschwitz and that "gas chambers" were the means used to execute it. Without examining the records of the investigation, one cannot say for sure whether this objective had already been achieved during the pre-trial interrogation period, and, if so, how. That it was achieved, at least to some extent, is shown by the behaviour of the defendants in the course of the trial, a matter we shall discuss later on. Even during the pre-trial investigation, some of the defendants may have admitted - whether in good faith or not -that they had "heard" about the "gassing of Jews" while they were stationed at Auschwitz, in order to secure their release from custody. At first, this concession may have seemed quite harmless. In all probability, none of the defendants knew or could even have imagined that participation in a "selection" on the Auschwitz-Birkenau railway platform, for example, guard duty, would be construed as complicity in the alleged "gas chambers" murders.

At the beginning of the Auschwitz Trial, nine of the twenty-two defendants, that is to say, almost half, were still being held in custody. Some of them had been imprisoned for more than four or five years, which can only be called absolutely out of the ordinary. During the course of the trial, eight other defendants were taken into custody, one by one, almost always as a result of witness testimony against them. The illness of two of the defendants, Heinrich Bischoff and Gerhard Neubert, resulted in their cases being severed from the indictment; Bischoff died a few months afterwards. Only three of the defendants remained at liberty throughout the proceedings: Breitwieser, Schoberth, and Schatz. Most of the accused who were not retained in custody had to post bond of up to DM 50,000.[523] Under these circumstances, it is beyond doubt that all the defendants were under enormous psychological pressure, from the beginning of the investigation to the conclusion of the trial. This is exactly the situation in which the defendant in a show trial always finds himself.

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Particularly noteworthy is the fate of the most prominent of the defendants, Richard Baer, the last commandant of Auschwitz. He did not live to see the beginning of the trial. In December of 1960, Baer was arrested in the vicinity of Hamburg, where he was employed as a lumberjack. He died in June of 1963 under mysterious circumstances while being held in pre-trial custody.[524]

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[523] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 36ff.; Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 14f.

[524] See on this and on the following: Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß* p. 33; Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 14; Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 115ff.; Heinz Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug*, pp. 132ff.; *Deutsche Wochenzeitung* of October 19, 1963, p. 3; *Deutsche Hochschullehrerzeitung* Nr. 111/1963.

According to various sources, which, in turn, rely on reports that appeared in the French press, Baer adamantly refused to confirm the existence of "gas chambers" at the camp he once administered. Although it has been alleged that he was eliminated by poisoning on account of this refusal, the cause of his death has never been established. His wife claimed that he was in excellent health.

While Langbein merely states that an autopsy revealed that he died of "natural causes," Naumann specifies a "circulatory ailment" as the cause of death. Of course, a circulatory ailment is only a symptom of preexisting disease that has causes of its own. It is quite possible, however, that the physical condition of this strong and healthy outdoor labourer deteriorated as a result of his treatment in prison.[525] That would be damning enough to those suspicious of the whole affair when one reads the report on the autopsy performed at the Frankfurt-Main University School of Medicine: "The ingestion of an odourless, non-corrosive poison... cannot be ruled out."[526] Nevertheless, there was no further probe into the cause of Baer's death, and Chief Public Prosecutor Bauer ordered his body cremated. One may dismiss the possibility that Baer committed suicide, since, according to his wife, he was counting on an acquittal. Moreover, shortly before his death Baer complained to the guards that he was feeling ill and asked for a physician. That is hardly the action of someone who intends to take his own life.

This very mysterious event hardly attracted public attention, and presumably the affair was systematically hushed up. When one considers the reaction the death of an inmate in a German prison usually calls forth among officials, legislators, and the mass media, it seems astounding that this case was kept so quiet, all the more so because Baer was no ordinary prisoner, but a man whose testimony could have had the greatest impact in the upcoming trial.

The suspicion that interested parties had Baer removed by means of poison - as has often been claimed - cannot be dismissed. The motives for such an action are obvious. If anyone at all knew the truth about the "gas chamber" allegation, it was Baer, the last commandant of Auschwitz. That he refused to give his authoritative confirmation to the "gas chamber" story is shown by the fact that the statements he made during his interrogation were not read into the trial record. They must have been of no value to the prosecution. What the main defendant had to say about the central accusation regarding Auschwitz was anything but a matter of indifference to the initiators of the trial. Had Baer [239] resolutely contested this allegation and been able to show its absurdity, he would not only have made it difficult for them to attain their primary objective —to reinforce the "gas chamber" myth and establish it as an unassailable "historical fact"— but he might also have caused the proceedings to take an entirely different course. By his steadfastness, Baer would have set an example for the co-defendants to follow, and perhaps even influenced some of

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[525] Treatment with drugs does not appear to be excluded either. One is inclined to attribute such methods only to the Russians. Rassinier, however, gives an instance for this also having occurred in the prisons of the western Allies (see *Drama der Juden Europas*, p. 41f.).

[526] The Nuremberg attorney Eberhard Engelhardt cites this part of the autopsy report in a letter to the State Prosecutor's Office in Frankfurt on November 12, 1973 (copy in the archive of this author) in alleging that Baer was poisoned while in prison pending trial.

The prosecutor's office denied the poisoning theory, but did not challenge the autopsy report.

the other participants in the trial. Hence one should give some credence to the charge that Baer's refusal to play the role assigned him in the script is the reason the trial could not begin until after his death.[527] We shall not delve into this matter. The fact is that the Auschwitz Trial did begin almost immediately after Baer's death. Laternser is of the opinion that there was too much haste involved.[528] However, the preliminary investigations were completed on October 19, 1962, as Langbein informs us,[529] so nothing much really could have stood in the way of the start of the trial-except, of course, Baer's "stubbornness."

Was Baer murdered in jail? Ever since the brutal abduction of Adolf Eichmann in Argentina-as a matter of fact, even before-it has been common knowledge that the Israeli secret service is capable of just about anything.[530] Given such circumstances as the fact that Chief Public Prosecutor Bauer was a Zionist —for which reason he should not have been permitted to head the combined investigation— it is quite possible that the mighty arm of international Jewry was able to reach into Baer's ail cell, though for lack of conclusive proof, this question must remain open. At any rate, one may assume that Baer's sudden death came as a great shock to the other defendants. Since his position on the "gas chambers" allegation must have been known to them, some of the defendants may have taken his unexpected and mysterious demise as a warning, and altered their own stance accordingly. For the promoters of the trial, Baer's death could only have been a welcome development.

The composition of the court is something that must have had a considerable effect on the course of the trial. Now, in all trials the empanelment of the tribunal is determined according to the judicial calendar, which is not insusceptible to manipulation, since it is usually valid for only a year. Naturally, the promoters of the Auschwitz Trial were eager to see the proceedings placed in the hands of a court that would give the case more or less the kind of treatment they desired. In particular, Chief Public Prosecutor Bauer, the right-hand man of the initiators of the trial, must have had definite ideas in this regard. Thus it is interesting to earn, from Laternser's book, *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß* [The Other Side in the Auschwitz Trial], that meetings took place between members of Bauer's staff, the Presiding judge of the Regional Court, and the prospective head of the Assize Court, during which, among other things, the opening date of the trial and the related matter of the composition of the court were discussed. At the very beginning of the [240] trial, Laternser formally protested that manipulation had been involved in the empanelment of the tribunal, but the court did not rule on his petition until February 3, 1964, more than a month after the proceedings had started, and rejected it without deliberating the proofs and arguments he submitted.[531]

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[527] Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, p. 120; Roth, *Der makaberste Betrug*, p. 136.

[528] *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, p. 23.

[529] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 33.

[530] One should be reminded in this connection of the poisoning of thousands of SS men in a Nuremberg internment camp, which could not be kept secret only because of its extraordinary magnitude. These and other misdeeds of Zionist covert organizations were later made public by Jews (Bar-Zohar, *Die Rächer*. See *Deutsche Wochenzeitung* of January 3, 1969, p. 16. An eyewitness report to the poison murder in the Nuremberg internment camp appeared in the *Deutsche National Zeitung* of June 25, 1976 (Page 11; letter to the editor by H. Lies, Hannover).

[531] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 26f., 403ff., 406ff. and 410.

Taking the whole background of the Auschwitz Trial into consideration, one gets the distinct impression that the forces behind these proceedings were intent from the very beginning on staging an out-and-out show trial.[532] As we noted above, the essential characteristic of a show trial is that it aims, first and foremost, at producing a politically demonstrative effect rather than arriving at an objective judicial decision. Even in the preliminary stages, the Auschwitz Trial bore every conceivable trait of such a proceeding. The pre-trial investigation was centralized without regard to established legal jurisdiction; extra-judicial forces that were hardly disinterested parties in the Auschwitz case were allowed to influence the preparations for the trial; the framing of the indictments was entrusted to a prosecution staff under the direction of a veteran Zionist; the empanelment of the court involved manipulation; and, last but not least, the accused were treated in a manner out of keeping, to put it mildly, with the German judicial system, something that -together with the mysterious death of the most prominent defendant in pre-trial detention -must have had an effect on their will to defend themselves and, no doubt, was responsible for their often ambiguous conduct during the trial.

The Conduct of the Trial

For those who were unable to attend the proceedings against Mulka, et al. before the Frankfurt Assize Court, the reportage of Bernd Naumann, Hermann Langbein, and Hans Laternser gives a rather good picture of the course of the trial. While Naumann, who covered the trial for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, a daily newspaper, gives a chronological depiction of the proceedings in his book Auschwitz: *Bericht über die Strafsache Mulka und andere vor dem Schwurgericht Frankfurt**, Langbein, who likewise was able to observe the trial almost continuously, arranged his documentary account of the trial, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, according to subject matter, discussing the alleged crimes of the defendants and presenting the testimony of the witnesses within this framework. Augmenting our picture of the trial is the illuminating study by the defence attorney Dr. Hans Laternser *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*.

On the basis of these three documentary works on the trial, we shall examine in the following sections of this chapter how the proceedings were implemented.[533] Here let it be noted that Laternser's account is devoted

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[532] According to Langbein, the Auschwitz trial dealt not only with the personal "crimes" of the accused, but with the moral situation of the National Socialist era" (*Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, p. 10). Bernd Naumann (*op. cit.*, p. 7) emphasizes "its ethical and educational importance." Is any more proof needed that this trial was seen as a show trial?

* Auschwitz: Report on the Criminal Case of Mulka et al. before the Frankfurt Court of Assizes.

[533] I should have liked to have gone into some things more deeply using the trial documents. My requests to examine the documents were, however, denied, first by the Frankfurt District Attorney, and then by the Hessian Minister of Justice (see Appendix V below). Appealing this decision to the administrative courts would have been theoretically possible, but would in all certainty have taken several years. The prospects for success would have been quite doubtful, since the matter concerned the legality of rulings based on the opinions of administrative authorities. Therefore, I decided against a legal challenge to the ruling. The trial documents which I have evaluated will give some notion of the character of the Auschwitz trial and of its importance to future historians.

The judgment of the district court [Landgericht] of Frankfurt/Main of August 19-20, 1965 (Az. 4Ks 2/63) is published in Justiz und *NS-Verbrechen, Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen* [justice and National Socialist Crimes, Collection of

primarily to the juridical aspects of the trial, whereas the other two authors, both of whom are laymen, basically confine themselves to [241] reporting the testimony of the defendants and witnesses. Naturally, they do not spare us their own opinions, which, naturally again, are fully in accord with the fundamentals of the Auschwitz legend, and doubtless influenced their selection of material. Even Laternser proceeds from the basic premises of the legend, as is obvious not only from what he writes in his foreword to *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, but also from his summations, which appear in the book. The fact that he is "above suspicion" simply makes his criticism of the proceedings an the more valuable. Both of the other authors are virtually uncritical of the Auschwitz Trial.

Now let us get down to particulars.

The Trial Setting

The Auschwitz Trial was not held in the Frankfurt Courthouse, since it supposedly lacked a suitable courtroom.[534] To those unfamiliar with judicial practice, this may seem to have been an unavoidable necessity. After all, given the extraordinary publicity surrounding the Auschwitz Trial —it attracted worldwide attention— a large number of journalists were expected to be on hand. Also, from the very beginning, it was planned - in accordance with what Naumann calls the "ethical, social, and educative implications" of the trial —to compel groups of young people, for example, army units and school classes, to attend sessions of the proceedings. And, of course, one counted on heavy attendance by politically oriented groups and associations.

But all this really did not justify the rental, at additional expense to the public, of "courtrooms" outside the courthouse, particularly in view of the fact that attendance at the trial would be artificially high as a result of an orchestrated publicity campaign. At first, sessions were held in the assembly room of the Frankfurt Municipal Council, the "Römer" hall. Beginning on April 3, 1964, the auditorium of the recently constructed "Haus Gallus" was appropriated for this purpose. However, neither place suited the requirements of a court proceeding-as Laternser shows in considerable detail —and that alone should have prevented their use in a trial of such importance.[535]

Although the law prescribes that court proceedings be held publicly — something that is especially important in the case of penal trials— the relatively small space in courthouses ordinarily imposes certain limitations on public attendance. When all seats are occupied, the courtroom doors are closed. I cannot recall a single case of a large trial in which sessions were regularly held outside the courthouse. Even the unusually large number of defendants, attorneys, and other participants in the Auschwitz Trial did not warrant this exodus from the courthouse. Every courthouse has at least one chamber that could, with a little effort, be made to accommodate such a crowd. Leaving all this aside, the [242] Auschwitz Trial would not have reached almost grotesque

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German Penal Sentences in NS Capital Crirnes] vol. XXI, pp. 362ff. (Verlag University Press, Amsterdam).

[534] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, p. 35.

[535] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 15ff. Even Langbein complains of a drawback: In the theatre hall of Gallus Hause a shiny glass partition behind the accused made identification difficult for the witnesses (*Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 35)!

physical proportions had not the initiators of the trial insisted on the legally dubious measure of trying all the defendants under one jurisdiction.

Thus one cannot shake off the impression that even the courtroom was selected with the purpose in mind of producing the greatest possible politically demonstrative effect, and, as we have shown, this is a basic element in all show trials. The fact that the rooms did not meet the requirements of a court proceeding merely underscores this point. No ordinary criminal trial would have been conducted under such handicaps. As Laternser points out, insufficient physical distance between the spectators and the participants in the trial, among other things, resulted in some very unpleasant problems. At least at the beginning of the trial, the participants had trouble communicating —an intolerable condition by itself. Worst of all, the seating arrangement in both of these makeshift courtrooms was a considerable handicap to the defence attorneys, especially during cross examinations.

So far as the externals of the trial go, there are several other circumstances that point to the show trial-like character of these proceedings. We are not considering here so much the fact that they were soon transferred to a theatre, with the court on stage —though certainly symbolic, that was probably just a gaffe on the part of the stagers of this travesty of justice. No, what really strikes us is how publicity was used to accomplish the desired objective, namely, to produce a widespread conviction that it is an indisputable fact that genocide was committed on an immense scale at Auschwitz.

In this connection, one thinks first of the "job" done by the mass media whose uniformly biased reportage was apparently the result of planning and coordination. To be sure, it is the legitimate task of the press, radio, and television to keep the public informed about significant trials. Especially in the case of penal trials, it is of the utmost importance that the coverage be objective and impartial, and usually it is. A fundamental principle of a nation based on laws is that the defendant is to be presumed innocent until proved guilty. In the case of the Auschwitz Trial, this principle was, it seems, simply cast to the wind. Even prior to the trial, the entire mass media portrayed the alleged events at Auschwitz and the alleged participation of the defendants in them as long established facts, at times going even so far as to describe the accused, who were in no position to defend themselves, as "beasts in human shape." Numerous prosecution witnesses were given an opportunity to talk about their alleged experiences at Auschwitz over the radio, on television, and in the press. By making public statements before they appeared in court, some witnesses practically committed themselves to giving a certain line of testimony.[536] During the trial, the reporting was just as biased as before —if anything, more so. With rather inappropriate understatement, Dr. Laternser simply refers in this connection to the [243] kind of "pressure" certain sections

[536] Adler, Langbein, Lingens-Reiner observed in their book, *Auschwitz*, which includes numerous accounts of testimony by later witnesses in the Auschwitz trial, that their testimony had already been broadcast over the radio before the trial started. Furthermore, according to the book's foreword, many of these testimonies were specifically written for the book and for the upcoming trial. One cannot help but get the impression that the testimonies of these later witnesses were artificially devised with the trial in mind. The article "Zeugen für den Ankläger" in the *Allgemeine jüdische Wochenzeitung* of December 16, 1977 is quite informative on this. Many witnesses referred expressly to what they had read in the press! See Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 95, footnote 2.

of the mass media exert on participants in "trials of a political nature" —a well-known characteristic of show trials.[537]

The judges cannot be held responsible for this manipulation of public opinion. In fact, they were also under "pressure" from the mass media. Attorneys of the prosecution team were the ones who kept feeding the mass media "information." For example, the reports that between two and four million Jews were killed in Auschwitz alone can be traced to press releases from the Ludwigsburg Central Office and the Frankfurt District Attorney's Office.[538]

This propaganda activity reached its culmination in the Auschwitz Exhibition that opened in the Frankfurt Paulskirche¨, of all places, on November 18, 1964, while the trial was still in progress. The impetus for this exhibition came from Chief Public Prosecutor Bauer and the Frankfurt attorneys who represented the co-plaintiffs. When it first began, captioned pictures of the defendants were displayed, and they were removed only after the defence formally protested. The defence attorney Dr. Laternser filed a complaint with the Hessian Minister of Justice about Bauer's unprofessional conduct, but it was rejected as "unfounded." Laternser concludes his account of this truly scandalous affair with the terse remark: "In this trial, the normal standards did not apply, even though there are no others."[539]

That really sums it all up.

Finally, let us return to a matter we mentioned at the beginning of this section. Throughout the proceedings, school classes and other groups of young people were continually brought to attend the trial. These field trips were evidently organized in response to orders from on high. Their purpose could hardly have been to teach the younger generation about the German judicial system through observation of a trial. No trial could have been less suited to that purpose than this one. Because of its basic structure and its scope, not to mention the way it was conducted, the Auschwitz Trial could provide them at best only with a very incomplete view of practical jurisprudence. Of course, this judicial monstrosity was the perfect medium for an insidious morality play designed to implant a permanent guilt complex in the minds of the generation that would one day shape the German future. Langbein was elated to see German youth forced to witness this show, and thereby he revealed once again the true purpose of the Auschwitz Trial:

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> Likewise, the fact that classes of school pupils attended the proceedings every day they were in session, except during the school holidays, along with other groups of young

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[537] *Op. cit.*, p. 33. See also Bernd Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 200f.

[538] In the supplement "Suchlicht" [Searchlight] to his monthly magazine *Nation Europa* (Nr. 12/1961) Arthur Ehrhardt dealt extensively with the numbers of Jews allegedly murdered which have been circulated by the Central Office of Ludwigsburg. As a result of this, judicial proceedings were begun against him. After a while, however, the investigation was suspended without further ado. A striking story in many respects!

¨ The Frankfurt Paulskirche, a Lutheran church built in early Neo-Classical style, destroyed by Allied bombing raids during World War II and later partially reconstructed, was the meeting place of the German National Assembly of 1848-49, which attempted to bring about the unification of the Reich on the basis of liberal and nationalist principles similar to those on which the United States was founded. As a patriotic shrine, it may be compared to Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The insulting maliciousness on the part of the organizers of this "Auschwitz Exhibition" is self-evident. - T. F.

[539] On this see Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 94f. Naumann reports fairly extensively on the controversy between defence and prosecution which arose over this (*op. cit.*, pp. 200f.).

> people, shows that the *significance of the trial for contemporary history* was understood by many of those who hold positions of authority. At times, schools had to make their reservations weeks in advance to get space at the trial.[540] (emphasis added)

This is fully in line with Langbein's previous statement that the trial was "primarily of historical, not legal," significance. As one of the main initiators of the Auschwitz Trial, he ought to know.

[540] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 49. Laternser terms the assignment of school classes to this trial "a highly questionable educational method" and refers in this connection to paragraph 175 of the Gerichtsverfassungsgesetz according to which "minors" can be denied entry to a public trial (*op. cit.*, pp. 39f.). The Auschwitz court never deemed this necessary.

The Trial Participants

The judges

The success of a show trial like the Frankfurt proceedings depends above all on the judges, particularly the presiding judge.[541] Should the presiding judge decide to conduct the proceedings according to the view that only issues relevant to the trial as a penal case will enter into the court's decision, and avoid anything that merely serves to produce a politically demonstrative effect, then he would be hindering the attainment of the objective of the forces behind the trial, if not sabotaging it entirely. Alas, the conduct of the Auschwitz Trial shows that it is doubtful whether the presiding judge and his judicial colleagues even considered doing this. Nevertheless, Presiding Judge Hofmeyer felt himself called upon to deny, in his oral opinion, the defence attorneys' charge that this trial had been a "political trial" and a "show trial." He went on to say that "those who followed this trial know that it was anything but a show trial, a trial in which the verdict is agreed on in advance and the trial itself is nothing but a farce designed to give the public a show."[542] This comment —which does not appear in the written opinion— is highly significant. It is supposed to be perfectly obvious and worthy of no special mention that show trials do not exist in a state based on law, and beneath the dignity of any judge to take such a suggestion seriously.

As a matter of fact, the essential characteristic of a show trial is not that the "verdict is agreed on in advance" and that all the defendants will be convicted, if that is what the Presiding Judge meant to say. Were this the case, the Nuremberg "war crimes" trials staged by the Allies could not be considered show trials, since some of the defendants were acquitted —as in the Auschwitz Trial. The decisive factor is whether judicial rules and procedures are ignored or violated outright in order to achieve a politically demonstrative effect, something that does not, of course, exclude the possibility of certain juristic formalities being observed. Even show trials must have a semblance of legality.

Throughout the course of the Auschwitz Trial, it was evident that the main purpose of these proceedings - supported even by the bench - was to establish as an incontestable historical fact the picture of Auschwitz [245] that the initiators of the trial found politically desirable. From the outset, the judges made it clear that they regarded Auschwitz as the centre of the destruction of millions of Jews, planned by and executed under orders from the German leadership. The whole trial was simply an effort to "corroborate" this "fact" and

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[541] In the Frankfurt Assize Court there were three professional judges —including the presiding judge— and six jurors. Further two substitute judges and five auxiliary jurors were added in order to ensure the trial would continue in case a judge or juror dropped out. For details see Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 23ff.

The role of the jurors, the majority of whom were women, need not be considered here. In this mammoth trial they were at the mercy of the professional judges. Laternser thinks that they were not in a position to give "judgement" during the deliberation of the verdict (*op. cit.,* p. 54). That they were subject to the "pressure" of the mass media at least as much as the judges, is self-evident.

[542] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 274f. Significantly, Langbein does not mention this part of the opinion in his documentation of the trial though he deals with the oral verdict. Laternser limited himself to communicating the Tenor of the Auschwitz judgement (*op. cit.*, pp. 436-438).

present a comprehensive picture of it to the public. At no point in the argumentation were the basic premises of the indictment and the *raison d'être* of the trial disputed, a phenomenon characteristic of show trials. Laternser's observation that the German witnesses all gave the "impression of being downright cowed" is further testimony to the show trial character of these proceedings.[543]

To be sure, the Presiding Judge is said to have stated in his oral opinion that it was not the task of the court to fulfil the wish implicit in the trial (!), or "to master the past"* through a comprehensive historical presentation of the contemporary events; its only function was 1o examine the validity of the charges" and not to "strive for other goals."[544]

These statements, though they express a view of the proper function of a court of law that is indubitably correct, are actually nothing but hollow rhetoric so far as the Auschwitz Trial is concerned. The facts about that trial tell a different story. In various ways, the court allowed ample opportunity - as we shall show in detail later on - for the treatment of recent history, made numerous pronouncements on the subject in its written opinion, although there was no reason to do so, and even convicted defendants whose deeds themselves would otherwise have borne no relation to the crime of murder, or any other legally punishable crime, on the basis of the totally unsubstantiated "gas chamber" allegation. Thus it cannot be said that the court limited itself to "examining the validity of the indictments." As a matter of fact, the court did not strictly speaking-even examine the validity of the indictments. And thereby it underscored, whether intentionally or not, the show trial character of these proceedings.

It may be that the mass media had convinced the court, particularly its Presiding Judge, that millions of Jews were killed, specifically, "gassed, " at Auschwitz. The influence of the mass media, even on intelligent people, is one of the sad facts of our times. A critical look at the literature on recent history would have shown the court that there is at least some [246] doubt about this propaganda charge. But the judges lacked either the time or the courage to come to grips with this material.

It is not outside the realm of possibility that all or some of the judges knew better, or had certain doubts, but felt it would be inopportune, as it were, to cast the slightest doubt on the story of the "extermination of the Jews." Laternser says that he even got the impression that the Presiding judge was visibly anxious to avoid making any "mistakes" that might bring negative comment from the press.[545] One can readily imagine the grave consequences the judges would have suffered for their heresy had they voiced any doubt about the Auschwitz legend.

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[543] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

* To render the phrase "die Vergangenheit zu bewältigen" as "to master the past" is perhaps too literal. The original German has connotations of rewriting history, specifically, for the purpose of "re-educating" the German people. At least in German revisionist circles, the term "Vergangenheitsbewältgung" is used in the sense of "history-twisting."-T.F

[544] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 274. Langbein does not mention these remarks either. Apparently they do not fit his concept.

[545] *Op. cit.*, p. 28. The occasion for this remark was the court's use, much protested by Laternser, of different standards in dealing with the defendants and their lawyers on the one hand, and the prosecution on the other. Undoubtedly this had its origin in a certain prejudice in the matter of the case itself. Prejudice is often founded on opportunism.

Be that as it may, the net result of this judicial bias was to put the stamp of a show trial on these proceedings. Some of the characteristic features of a typical show trial are lack of objectivity and impartiality in the conduct of the proceedings, presentation of one-sided and thoroughly insufficient evidence, and the making of allowances for the political objectives of the initiators of the trial. All these things, which along with the constant hammering into the public mind of the court's "findings" are usually enough to accomplish the purposes for which the show trial was designed, were present in the Auschwitz Trial. Whether the judges were desirous, or even aware, of what was happening is, in the last analysis, beside the point.

That the Auschwitz Trial court, particularly its Presiding Judge, behaved in a manner typical of a show trial court is abundantly clear from the examples Laternser gives in his book, of which we can cite only a few here.[546] This conduct is evident even from Langbein's and Naumann's documentary volumes on the trial, although it certainly was not the intention of these authors to cail attention to it.

Typical of the atmosphere of this trial is a remark which the Presiding Judge made in the initial stage of the proceedings: "hearsay" would be assigned "greater weight" in this trial because such a long time had elapsed since the alleged events.[547] This is a statement guaranteed to raise eyebrows among professional jurists. In an ordinary criminal trial, testimony based on hearsay is immediately rejected. For one of the basic rules of a scrupulous argumentation is that only what the witness actually knows firsthand may be taken into account. Apparently, the Presiding Judge did not consider it necessary, or at least expedient, to conduct this trial as an "ordinary criminal trial." Given the "liberal" attitude of the court, prosecution witnesses could practically lie a blue streak. In passing let it be noted that the reason the Presiding Judge gave for the admission of "hearsay" in this trial is absolutely illogical. Every experienced practitioner of criminal law knows that witnesses find it difficult to recall their own experiences properly after a period of time has elapsed, even if they are in good physical and mental shape. The testimony of hardly impartial witnesses about things they heard almost two decades before must be even less reliable. Nevertheless, [247] the judges in the Auschwitz Trial were willing to listen for hours to all sorts of prison gossip, provided it fit into the accepted picture of Auschwitz, and thus contributed to the success of the "show."[548]

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[546] See Laternser, *op. cit*., pp. 28ff., which deal especially with trial procedures. Aside from these pages, most other passages in Laternser's account contain striking examples.

[547] Laternser, *op. cit*., p. 29.

[548] On "testimony" from hearsay, see Hellwig's detailed treatment, *op. cit*., pp. 167ff.

In this connection Hellwig brings up the rapid multiplication of atrocity accusations in the First World War, which Ponsonby also described in his *Falsehood in Wartime*. Leading Allied figures have long since cynically acknowledged that they used the he as a "legitimate" means of policy, both in World War II and thereafter. Udo Walendy compiled a few such statements in *Die Methoden der Umerziehung*. Nevertheless, the reality continues to be intentionally overlooked, as in the Auschwitz Trial.

Butz deals with the influence of propaganda and rumour on the creation and spread ot the gassing legend in many passages of *The Hoax*.

The reports of former camp inmates consist on the whole of mere repetitions of camp rumours, as can be gathered for the most part from the descriptions themselves. Not even Rückerl (*NS-Prozesse*, p. 26) can deny that all too often with witnesses, hearsay and personal experiences are "inextricably entangled." The presiding judge of the Auschwitz Trial solved the problem "elegantly" by attributing an even "higher importance" to "hearsay."

The treatment of witnesses by the court was totally lacking in the judicial fairness customary in ordinary criminal trials. All the prosecution witnesses, most of whom came from abroad, were treated with the utmost courtesy and respect. Very seldom did the judges cast doubt on their claims, no matter how fantastic the tale may have been. Their testimony was not scrutinized in the light of other relevant testimony and evidence, as is normally done in penal trials. Attempts by the defence to do so met with all kinds of procedural sleight of hand. Exonerating testimony was treated with the greatest scepticism by the court. Defence witnesses who once belonged to the SS risked being arrested in the courtroom if they did not take at least a modicum of care that their testimony did not deviate too far from the "line" set by the court, or if their testimony aroused the slightest suspicion that they had been involved in the alleged murder of Jews. On the other hand, the foreigners who testified for the prosecution had a kind of carte blanche: They could freely return to their homelands even when they had obviously committed perjury or come under suspicion of having murdered a fellow inmate.[549]

How lacking in objectivity and impartiality the court was can be seen from the general attitude of the judges towards the accused. Typical of this was a remark the Presiding judge made during the session of July 23, 1965 —which no doubt reflected the sentiments of the other judges-that the trial would have progressed far better had the defendants told the truth from the first day on.[550] That a member of the court should have made this blanket condemnation of the defendants is almost incredible. It was both unfounded and hardly in keeping with the judicial reserve taken for granted in normal trials. What is more, the Presiding Judge reiterated this accusation in the oral opinion. There he claimed that the defendants "have not furnished any clues to help in the search for truth, have kept silent on many points, and have largely failed to tell the truth," adding that "the defendants have no right to feel discriminated against if in one or the other instance the court accepted the word of a witness, since the defendants failed to rectify witness testimony by truthful accounts of what happened."[551] This is tantamount to saying that the court gave credence to prosecution witnesses not because their testimony was trustworthy, but because the defendants either did not challenge it or said something else, which, after all, was entirely within their rights. To put it another way: If a witness told the court what it wanted to hear, he was always telling the "truth."

One might argue that in other trials judges have been lacking in objectivity and impartiality. Though this objection may be basically correct, one must recognize a considerable qualitative and quantitative difference [248] between the constant partiality of the Auschwitz Trial court, especially the Presiding judge, and the occasional breaches of judicial objectivity found in some other trials. This is the impression one gets from all the documentary volumes on the trial, not just from Laternser's account.

Given this situation, it was almost to be expected that the Presiding Judge never made an attempt to stop or restrain those in the audience who loudly heckled and insulted the defendants and their attorneys, that he frequently interrupted the defendants and their attorneys, and did not admit

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[549] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 34ff., 38, 57f., 85ff.
[550] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[551] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 278f.

relevant questions from the defendants and their attorneys. In this way, he finally brought them to the point where they hardly bothered to exercise their procedural rights. Truly, the normal standards did not apply in this trial.[552]

Under these circumstances, nobody will be surprised to hear that the defence felt handicapped by the way the court conducted the proceedings, as Dr. Laternser frequently remarked.[553] This situation might have some bearing on the curious fact that neither the accused nor the defence at any time dared to cast doubt on the claims that Auschwitz functioned as an "extermination camp" and that "gas chambers" existed there. For the bench had —as all the documentary volumes on the trial show— already indicated by its questioning of witnesses and defendants its preconceived ideas about this matter. It would have been futile, if not dangerous, for the defence to challenge those ideas. The court acquitted itself perfectly of the task assigned it by the promoters of the trial.

In conclusion, one cannot describe the show trial-like atmosphere which the prejudicial conduct of the bench gave these proceedings more aptly than in the words of the most widely respected attorney for the defence, Dr. Laternser:

> At no time in any of the great international trials in which I have participated —not even the International Military Tribunal Trial in Nuremberg— was there the kind of charged atmosphere that prevailed in the Auschwitz Trial. Those trials had a far more objective atmosphere, even though they took place immediately after the cessation of hostilities.[554]

A more devastating verdict on this trial cannot be imagined, especially if one bears in mind that the victors'trials of the post-war era, which Laternser mentions by way of comparison, have always been subject to severe criticism, even in the conquerors'own countries. Today few people would deny that they were purely show trials.

An equally devastating verdict on the Presiding judge of the Frankfurt Assize Court appeared in a Swiss newspaper a few days after the beginning of the trial: The Presiding Judge was described as being probably the "best prosecutor in the courtroom"![555]

It is perhaps superfluous to add that such a court could never arrive at a determination of historical truth.

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The Prosecution and Accessory Prosecutor

By overemphasizing political and historical matters, the prosecutors and accessory prosecutors in the Auschwitz Trial greatly contributed to giving these proceedings the character of a show trial.[556] The prosecution considered all the defendants "guilty" simply because they happened to serve at the Auschwitz "extermination camp." In this regard, the prosecution did not make an exception even of Dr. Schatz, who served at Auschwitz as a dentist, though not

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[552] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 30ff.

[553] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 28ff., 32, 37f., 44ff.

[554] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[555] Quoted after Laternser (*op. cit.*, p. 33), who unfortunately does not give the title and edition of the newspaper in question, which one probably should view as a "white crow."

[556] The prosecution was represented by 1st District Attomey Grossmann as well as District Attorneys Kügler, Vogel, and Wiese; Wiese was still an assistant prosecutor at the beginning of the trial. The Frankfurt attorneys Ormond and Raabe, as well as attorney Prof. Kaul from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), appeared to represent the families of the alleged victims. See Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 56 and 63.

a single witness could be found to testify against him. It demanded that he be sentenced to life imprisonment, and one of the accessory prosecutors even suggested "30,000 consecutive life terms," a suggestion that Laternser rightly described as strange."[557]

The prosecutors and accessory prosecutors thus revealed themselves to be not the servants of justice, but the instruments and representatives of those political forces which aimed from the very start at staging a show trial —not that objectivity could be expected from the accessory prosecution, anyhow. As we have already noted (see p. 225 above), the prosecution in trials of a political nature frequently neglects its legal duty, set forth in §160, Paragraph 2 of the StPO, to search out facts which exonerate the defendants. This is only natural, since such trials are always initiated at the behest of a higher authority, and even prosecutors who are otherwise very scrupulous may consider it unwise to act contrary to the wishes of their patrons and superiors in the political system. The Auschwitz Trial was no exception in this regard. Assistant Prosecutor Wiese occasionally dared cross-examine witnesses on behalf of the accused.[558] In general, however, the prosecutors did not seem to consider themselves under any obligation. to inquire into exonerating circumstances. They did not even seem interested in whether the witnesses were telling the truth, something about which there was often considerable doubt. Their rule of thumb was, as Laternser notes, that foreign witnesses always tell the truth, German witnesses are to be regarded with suspicion, and former SS members usually lie. They did not even balk at taunting and personally insulting the defendants and their attorneys. In an ordinary criminal trial, that would have been inconceivable. They could afford to be offensive since the Presiding judge rarely censured such unprofessional and unfair conduct. As a matter of fact, he frequently overruled the objections of the defence to these tactics.[559] It is not difficult to imagine the kind of psychological war of attrition the prosecutors carried on against the defendants during the years of pre-trial interrogation. In short, the search for truth was impeded, rather than furthered, by the prosecution. That is exactly the role the prosecution always plays in show trials. The efforts of the prosecution to create, at the expense of the defendants, the picture of Auschwitz which the promoters of the trial thought [250] politically desirable were supported by the so-called accessory prosecutors, who were, of course, under no legal obligation to search for the truth. Their part in the trial was simply to represent the relatives of the alleged victims of Auschwitz. As Laternser emphasizes, they strove above all to give the public a false notion of the number of victims, and with their legally groundless motions, they were always trying to create a sensation.[560] What is more, the accessory prosecutor Friedrich Karl Kaul often used the courtroom as a forum for Communist propaganda. For example, he tried to connect leading figures in West German industry with the Auschwitz concentration camp.[561] The very fact that this representative of a Communist régime was even given an opportunity to agitate

[557] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 59f. and 259. The prosecution even appealed the acquittal of Dr. Schatz, unsuccessfully however.

[558] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 32 and 56, footnote 1.

[559] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 56ff.

[560] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 64. It is not clear whether there was any sort of investigation into whether the co plaintiffs they represented had lost relatives through murder at Auschwitz.

[561] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 69ff.

in the court of a state supposedly based on law underscores the fact that the Auschwitz Trial was nothing but a show trial.

The Defence

Unfortunately, the defence in the Auschwitz Trial did not form a united front. As Laternser notes with a certain bitterness, the defence attorneys hardly ever agreed on anything. According to his account, some of them even avoided the defence attorneys' lounge, preferring instead to chat with the prosecutors and accessory prosecutors during recesses.[562] Evidently, they wanted to display aloofness from their clients, though, of course, their conduct can be explained otherwise. It is easy to imagine how depressing and demoralizing even the outward bearing of the defence attorneys was to the defendants. If in the course of the trial the defendants hardly bothered to put up any resistance, so far as the basic issues in the trial were concerned, and merely tried to save their own necks, that was at least partially the result of lack of encouragement from their attorneys.

Far more important and remarkable is the fact, which emerges from all the documentary volumes on these proceedings, that none of the defence attorneys challenged the basis of the trial, namely, the allegation that Auschwitz was an "extermination camp." That would have required some research on their part, though that celebrated faculty caned common sense is really enough to provoke scepticism about the allegations that keep the extermination legend alive. However, the defence seems to have taken at face value the picture of Auschwitz spread by the mass media. One would assume that in a trial as important -and not just to the accused-as this one, the defence would have shown a bit of initiative in acquiring information, and independence in interpreting it. At least, one would expect some member of the defence team to have requested permission to introduce into the proceedings an expert whose viewpoint on these matters was sharply antithetical to that of the prosecution. That expert could easily have been the French historian Professor Rassinier, a man extremely well versed in the subject of the [251] concentration camps, whose most important works had already been published in German translation when the Auschwitz Trial began. He could have testified on the question of whether the alleged gassings were technically feasible, for example, or whether the Höss memoirs, which played a certain role in this trial, were actually genuine.[563] Since none of the defence attorneys had the courage to do so, the whole defence tearn is open to the charge of having behaved in a manner typical of the performers in a show trial. They simply did not use every

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[562] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

[563] Professor Paul Rassinier wanted to attend the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial as a reporter for the *Deutsche Wochenzeitung*. The president of the state court of Hesse had already reserved an entrance ticket with the number 113 for him. Yet clearly there was some apprehension at allowing this macabre judicial spectacle to be performed before a critical observer. When Rassinier attempted to travel to Frankfurt via Saarbrücken on December 18, 1963, he was taken off the train by German plainclothesmen on the order of the West German minister of the interior and deported across the border to France as an "undesirable alien"! His protests to the minister —at that time Höcherl— and to the German ambassador in Paris were not even answered. See *Deutsche Wochenzeitung* of August 4, 1967.

It is not difficult to imagine that the Jewish wirepullers of the Auschwitz Trial were behind these measures against a man who had rendered invaluable service to our people and to historical truth. Their guilty conscience could not have been demonstrated more clearly.

available means to oppose the political aims served by the trial, and thus failed the German people. From their conduct it is obvious that they could or would not recognize the tremendous social and political importance of this trial. Each one of them was concerned solely with securing an acquittal, or, at least, a more lenient sentence, for "his" client.

Sorry to say, this applies even to Dr. Laternser, who was the most steadfast member of the defence, and was therefore often attacked. Although it must be conceded that he constantly tried to oppose any argumentation that was irrelevant to the alleged crimes of the defendants and served only the political aims of the trial, he never left any doubt that he regarded the tale of the "extermination camp" with its "gas chambers" as a historical fact. At the beginning of his opening plea, he expressed his agreement with the prosecution's charge that "never in history has there been a persecution of the Jews equal in extent and gravity to that of the National Socialist régime." Further, he claimed that only the turn of events in the war and "not remorse or some other honourable motive" was the reason "Hitler and his accomplices did not finish the job of exterminating the European Jews."[564]

I am not really sure whether Dr. Laternser, an astute and experienced trial lawyer, actually believed all that himself, or whether he only pretended to believe it for tactical purposes. There is some reason to think the latter is the case. By taking this position-which involved disregarding all the evidence against the extermination thesis —he could argue, for instance, that the defendants were not "guilty" of "complicity to murder" by participating in "selections." True, the prisoners singled out as "unfit to work" were supposedly "gassed" forthwith; but Laternser insisted that Hitler had ordered the killing of all Jews transported to Auschwitz, so the "selections" actually "saved" part of the arriving Jews from immediate extermination. Since the others would have been "gassed" anyway, Laternser argued, mere participation in a "selection" could not be a legally punishable act.[565]

But leaving this stratagem aside, Laternser may also have been of the opinion that a frontal attack on the extermination legend would have no hopes of success, and might even bring additional difficulties for the accused. We recognize this position from the Nuremberg Trials. A characteristic feature of the show trial syndrome is that the accused, whether from rational considerations or as a result of brainwashing, [252] nearly always adapt themselves to the political sum and substance of the trial. When a defence attorney takes the approach of accommodation (perhaps even forcing it on his client), the individual defendant may benefit in some cases. Morally this posture is deserving of condemnation, of course, if those who have chosen it are aware of the truth.

The Defendants

When one contests the allegation that Jews were gassed en masse in Auschwitz-Birkenau, the reply is often that even the defendants in the Auschwitz Trial admitted that this happened. For example, Langbein writes in

[564] See Laternser's opening plea in *op. cit.*, p. 129, and p. 9 of the introduction.
[565] Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 185ff. (opening plea) and 249ff. (Dr. Frank's plea).

his book *Menschen in Auschwitz*: "None of the accused SS members tried to deny that gassing facilities were present at Auschwitz."[566]

Of course, this claim is no substitute for concrete evidence that "gas chambers" existed at Birkenau, evidence that is still lacking. If it were, one could claim with equal validity that witches really exist because during the Middle Ages some people accused of witchcraft "confessed," in many cases without their having been tortured.[567] But even Langbein's generalization is misleading. In most instances, the defendants in the Auschwitz Trial simply replied, when asked about "gas chambers" and such, that they had "heard" something about them. Only two of the defendants, Stark and Hofmann, "confessed" to having taken part in some "gassings." (We shall return to this matter later on.) Furthermore, the defendant Broad claimed to have witnessed, from a hiding place, the "gassing" of Jews in the old crematorium, a claim we have already examined in detail (see pp. 145ff. and 164ff. above). A long line of defendants —Boger, Schoberth, Bischoff, Scherpe, Neubert, and Bednarek— had nothing in particular to say about "gas chambers." It may be they were not even questioned about "gas chambers," since they were not involved in the charges against them. Two of these defendants were eliminated from the trial in the early stages: Bischoff (who died) and Neubert (who fell ill). Had they been asked, of course, they, too, might not have contested the "gas chamber" allegation.

In the introductory essay to his volume of documents on the trial, Langbein asserts that nothing prevented the accused from objecting to and refuting exaggerations.[568] From where he stands, this statement may make some sense, but actually it is totally at odds with the facts. No refutation of the gas chamber legend could have been expected from these people, who were without exception men of rather modest intellect. It is even possible they believed rumours about such things that they had heard someplace or other. Perhaps more decisive, however, was the trial atmosphere, the attitude of the other participants, including the defence, and the psychological stress of a pre-trial investigation lasting many years. Almost inevitably, this caused all the defendants to [253] resign themselves to their situation and defer to the presumptions of the court. In this, too, their behaviour was typical of that of the defendants in a show trial.

As a rule, the defendants in show trials, whose "crimes" are the ostensible *raison d'être* of the proceedings, do "confess," and it is beside the point whether they do so as a result of brainwashing or in order to secure legal advantages for themselves. In the Auschwitz Trial, the latter was probably the case, even though some of the defendants, judging by their behaviour, appear to have been victims of psychological manipulation that made them believe in

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[566] Langbein, *Menschen in Auschwitz*, pp. 24f.

[567] See Soldan/Heppe, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse* [History of the Witch Trials].

Even if the confessions were made "voluntarily," that is, in order to avoid torture or to earn the milder punishment of execution by beheading (Soldan/Heppe, *op. cit.*, p. 413), there were nevertheless other motives. The "witch" Christina Plum accused herself of "witchcraft" in Cologne. See *Damals*, booklet 5/1977, pp. 459ff., especially pp. 464 and 470.

It would not, by the way, be out of order to consider that the psychological punishment to which the accused at the Auschwitz Trial were subject during the trial and pre-trial imprisonment were no less effective than the physical tortures of the Middle Ages. Humans today are in general much more sensitive and less capable of resistance than in those times.

[568] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol, 1, p. 10.

the "mass gassings." We are acquainted with this phenomenon from the Nuremberg Trials.

Now, the mere fact that some of the defendants in the Auschwitz Trial "confessed" does not tell us whether their statements have any bearing on historical events. What matters is the content and reliability of those "confessions." As we have previously noted, even confessions must be thoroughly checked against other known facts and evidence before one can draw any conclusions about their credibility. The judges in the Auschwitz Trial neglected their judicial duty to check the facts, even when that was absolutely necessary, as in the case of Stark's and Hofmann's testimony regarding their direct participation in the "gassing" of Jews. The utter vagueness of these defendants' statements on an issue of such importance in this trial should have prompted the court to ask them a number of questions to clarify certain details of their testimony. But if we may rely on Naumann's reportage and Langbein's collection of documents on the trial, questions which might have helped get at the truth of the matter were never asked. This fact adds to the suspicion that we are dealing with a show trial. In their own view, the court and the prosecution were just acting logically. For neither the judges nor the prosecutors considered the "gassing of the Jews" to be anything less than an *a priori fact*, and, as we have shown, the defence shared this assumption. It makes no difference whether the judges realized their true purpose in the trial was merely to "sanction" this idea. By hook or crook, the show trial function of these proceedings, so glaringly conspicuous in this particular instance, was maintained from start to finish.

There can be no doubt that the defendants made "confessions" supporting the exterminationist dogma simply in order not to appear "uncooperative." These "confessions" were nothing more than an attempt to placate the court and the prosecution. They were probably made on the advice of the defence attorneys. If an attorney could succeed in persuading his client to "confess" —falsely— that he had shot inmates,[569] how much easier it must have been to convince him that it is only to his advantage to affirm that he knew, at least from "hearsay," that id gassings" of Jews occurred, and even to acknowledge that he played some part in them, albeit a not particularly important one. Could one really expect these defendants not to have conformed, more or less, to [254] the "extermination camp" dogma underlying the Auschwitz Trial? Some of them had been illegally detained for years; they had perhaps been "brainwashed" under the direction of the Jewish Chief Public Prosecutor Bauer; they may have taken the mysterious death of the "reticent" Commandant Baer as an object lesson; and, finally, they found themselves at the mercy of a blatantly prejudiced court in a trial conducted in a climate of near hysteria.

All this quite plausibly accounts for the behaviour not just of those defendants who stated that their "knowledge" of "gassings" was based on hearsay, but also for that of the defendants who claimed to have participated — if only to a very limited extent— in the alleged murder of Jews. After all, they could not deny that Auschwitz was an "extermination camp" and had "gas chambers" without going against the general line set by their attorneys. None of the defendants had the requisite courage for such independent action.

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[569] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Taken strictly, Stark's testimony has few implications for the problem under discussion here. Stark was in Auschwitz only until November of 1942. He was stationed at the parent camp, and never laid eyes on Birkenau. Some "witnesses" claimed to have seen him at a "gassing" in the old crematorium of the Auschwitz parent camp. Stark himself asserted that Commandant Höss had once ordered him to the roof of the crematorium to help with the 'pouring' of Zyklon B into the "pouring holes." He testified that only one man, a member of the disinfection squad, was there to aid him. The alleged victims were 150 to 200 Jews and Poles who, he was purportedly told, had been sentenced to death by a summary court. Stark said that he could not disobey the order since Commandant Höss had threatened to gas him too, when he showed signs of hesitating.[570]

Obviously, this "testimony" is of very little relevance to the extermination charge, since it concerns the purported execution of a summary court sentence, not the liquidation of Jews for racial reasons. Such executions were carried out by a firing squad, of course, not a disinfection squad. Stark's claim that an execution was carried out with gas is simply unbelievable. From everything known about these matters, it must be called an outright lie.

From Nuremberg Documents NI-9098 and NI-9912, which we have already mentioned in another connection, we know that Zyklon B was an extremely toxic gas; that its effects were immediate; that special training was necessary for its use; and that those who worked with it had to wear gas masks equipped with a special filter (see p. 211 above). All these facts were corroborated during the cross-examination of the defendant Arthur Breitwieser, who for some time was head of the disinfection squad at Auschwitz.[571] Stark did not mention that he received any special training or that he wore a gas mask equipped with a special filter during the alleged "gassing." Since according to his own [255] testimony, he did not perform any specific task in this "gassing action," he could not have plausibly claimed that he had worn such a mask. Either on purpose or for want of knowledge about the whole subject, the court passed over these contradictions.

In addition, Stark insisted, when questioned further by the Presiding Judge, that the victims screamed for about ten to fifteen minutes after the gas had been introduced into the "gas chamber." Given the instantaneous effect of Zyklon B, this is impossible. When asked to describe how people gassed to death look, Stark was at a loss for an answer. It would be a waste of time to say anything more about the "testimony" of this "witness" other than it got him a relatively lenient sentence. Stark was sentenced to ten years imprisonment under juvenile law, since he was a minor when the alleged crime was committed, and according to one of the court's experts had been emotionally immature for his age.[572] The other defendant who, "after initial denials," as the Auschwitz Trial opinion puts it, admitted to a certain degree of participation in the "gassing" of Jews in a Birkenau "gas chamber" was the onetime Chief Guard of the Auschwitz camp penal compound Franz Johann Hofmann. From April to September 1943, he was in command of the Gypsy compound at Birkenau, that

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[570] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 54f.; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 438ff.

[571] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 70; note 176 to Chapter 3.

[572] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 238, 271, 280f.; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 883ff.; Auschwitz Opinion, pp. 246ff.

is, at a time when, so the story goes, the "gassings" had just begun in the "gas chambers" of the newly constructed crematoria.[573] Hofmann must have been very well informed about these events, assuming for a moment they actually occurred, since he occupied a rather important post in Birkenau, and the Gypsy compound he administered was in close proximity to the new crematoria. Nevertheless, his testimony regarding these matters is vague and imprecise. According to both Naumann and Langbein the core of this testimony is as follows:

> There were beatings and physical abuse as Jewish details pushed the prisoners into the gas chambers which were disguised as shower rooms. The details were then gassed as well. That always led to great confusion; I even had to watch out to see that working prisoners weren't gassed along with the others. Yes, and sometimes we helped push. Well, what were we supposed to do? We were under orders.[574]

That is all the defendant Hofmann had to report about the alleged "gassings" and "gas chambers." Certainly, it is not much, and should have elicited further questioning. His description of the "gassing" process contradicts all the other accounts. Usually, it is claimed that prisoners were taken to the "gas chambers" quite peaceably, since the disguising of the "gas chambers" as shower rooms effectively served its purpose of deceiving the prisoners about their fate. Hofmann, too, alludes to this camouflage, and so a contradiction arises that shows up the absurdity of his whole "testimony" on the subject of the "gassings": "There were *beatings and physical abuse* as Jewish details *pushed the prisoners* into the gas chambers, which were disguised *as shower rooms."*

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Yet, the court failed to notice —or chose to ignore— the discrepancies in Hofmann's testimony. At least, it did not bother to ask any of the obvious questions. When Prosecuting Attorney Kügler asked Hofmann for details, he replied: "I cannot give any more specific information than this."[575]

Nothing could better illustrate the worthlessness of this "confession" as historical source material.

One question remains to be answered: What was the motive behind Hoffmann's self-incrimination? Considering the position he occupied at Birkenau, only two possible courses of action were open to him. First, he could choose to tell the truth and deny that he had ever seen "gas chambers" at the camp; second, he could do as the other defendants did and "acknowledge" that they existed. If he chose the latter course, he would be forced to include some reference to his own participation in the "gassings," since, after all, he was a camp official. This might have seemed the easiest way out, if he thought he could prove his "participation" in the "crime" was minimal. To be the only defendant who disputed the basis of the whole trial, though that would have served the cause of truth, may have seemed to him an exercise in futility.

But Hofmann had another, more compelling reason to fall in line, and not offend the court and prosecution by an apparent lack of "remorse" for his "crimes." He had already been sentenced to life imprisonment by Assize Court 11 in Munich, on December 19, 1961, for two murders he allegedly committed

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[573] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 231; Opinion, p. 363.

[574] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 64; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 240-241.

[575] Quoted after Langbein, *Der Auschwitz--Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 570.

at the Dachau camp, and he was now serving that sentence. It seems that Hofmann, like so many other former SS members who had to work in the concentration camps, had fallen victim to "professional witnesses." At any rate, a re-trial was initiated, and had not been concluded while the Auschwitz Trial was still in progress.[576] Were Hofmann. to be sentenced to another life term, in the Auschwitz Trial, an appeal on his previous conviction would have rather doubtful prospects for success. He was thus eager to come away from the Auschwitz Trial with only a determinate sentence, from which the time he had already served on the previous conviction could be deducted if he won the appeal. The only conceivable way to obtain this advantage from the Auschwitz Trial court —so his attorney must have advised him— was to refrain from disputing the dogma underlying the trial and to admit his participation in the alleged "gas chambers" murders, something about which the court had no doubt, anyway, in such a manner that he could be convicted at most of complicity in murder. Unfortunately for Hofmann, this turned out to be a miscalculation.

Partly because of this miscalculation, partly because of manipulation by others, he was impelled to make a false confession. That may explain his outburst of anger when the Presiding Judge pressured him to make additional self-incriminating statements. According to Naumann and Langbein, Hofmann shouted:

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> If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't say one word I am being saddled with one charge after another. If I had known everything that was still to come, I would have said nothing. Everybody is shouting for Hofmann: Hofmann is there and Hofmann isn't there. I don't know what you want from me.[577]

These are not the words of someone with murder on his conscience. They are a cry of despair. Years of persecution and imprisonment had left Hofmann a broken man. He probably would have been at a loss to explain the statements he was forced into making.

It is possible, of course, that Jewish details did herd new arrivals into various rooms, as Hofmann testified. However, those rooms were just shower baths, not "gas chambers." Nothing could be more natural than to give new arrivals at a concentration camp a thorough washing and delousing.[578]

To sum up, we can say that not a single one of the defendants in this trial gave convincing testimony that "gas chambers" existed at the Auschwitz camp. It is obvious that any statements they made to that effect were intended to help them get through the whole sticky business. Quite a few of the defendants "overdid it" in saying what was expected of them.[579] That is evident

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[576] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 231; Opinion, p. 364.

[577] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 65; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 233.

[578] See Butz, *Hoax*, pp. 122 and 131. Rassinier has often reported from his own experiences how afraid the prisoners were of the necessary disinfection procedures, because they suspected, on the basis of rumours, that the facilities in question were "gas chambers"; see for example *Die Lüge des Odysseus*, pp. 120 and 154

[579].The phenomenon of the complaisant witness —sometimes in return for minor favours— had been known for a long time. That there are cases in which defendants confess "just to please the judge in order to get a better treatment in jail or some other momentary advantage," had already been established by the famous professor of criminal law, Paul Johann Anselm von Feuerbach, in his work *Aktenmäßige Darstellung merkwürdiger Verbrechen* [Documentary Portraits

not only from the statements of Stark and Hofmann, but also from those of some of the other defendants who testified in the same vein. Their testimony clearly shows they were simply paying lip service to the Auschwitz Trial dogma in order to secure some advantage for themselves.

Often they got so bogged down in details that they defeated the purpose. For instance, the defendant Stefan Baretzki explained his "knowledge" of the "gassing of the Jews by claiming that camp personnel were "taught daily the reasons for the extermination of the Jews."[580] This is an obvious lie. Even the court acknowledged that Baretzki was not directly involved in the alleged gassings, but had merely participated in "selections." According to every version of the extermination tale, the "gassings" took place in total secrecy, and the circle of initiates was kept as small as possible. It is therefore altogether unlikely that Baretzki, who merely stood guard at "selections," would have received lectures from his superiors on the necessity of the extermination of the Jews. In his toadying to the court and prosecution, Baretzki went a little too far —not that they held it against him.

Just as reckless - and even more thoughtless - was a statement made by Dr. Willi Schatz, who was accused of participating in "selections" at the Auschwitz railway ramp. "Never in my life," he said, "did 1 imagine that the 'ramp' would be my downfall."[581] This remark can only mean that Dr. Schatz knew, while serving at Auschwitz, that the "selections" were not a preliminary to "gassings." Yet he had previously insisted —no doubt in conformity with the guidelines of his attorney— that it was "common knowledge" among camp personnel at that time that "Auschwitz was an extermination camp" and "what selection duty was all about. "[582]
[258]

Thus, in his attempt to accommodate those who were trying him, the defendant made statements blatantly contradicting the truth, well known to him, that the separation of the able-bodied from the infirm among new arrivals had nothing whatever to do with any homicidal designs.

However, Emil Hantl was the defendant whose claim to "knowledge" of "gassings" most distinctly revealed itself to be nothing more than a concession to the seemingly inalterable assumptions of the court. Though at first he dissociated himself from the alleged "gas chamber" murders, Hantl finally claimed that he had "saved the lives" of inmates who were to be gassed at Mauthausen towards the end of the war.[583] His "knowledge" of "gassings" at Mauthausen was on the same level as his "knowledge" of "gassings" at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Today not even the Institut filr Zeitgeschichte would dispute the fact that there were neither "gassings" nor "gas chambers" at the Mauthausen camp. This fact was also well known at the time of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. That a defendant was allowed to get away with making such a statement, simply because it fit in so nicely with the extermination legend, once again points up the show trial character of these proceedings. The Hantl episode was typical of the whole atmosphere of this trial.

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of Remarkable Crimes.) (Giessen, 1829, vol. 2, p. 454). Compare Hellwig, *op. cit.*, p. 27. Every practioner of criminal law knows that testimony so motivated is not a rarity.

[580] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 316; Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

[581] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 704.

[582] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 703.

[583] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 774; Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

The Argumentation

At the heart of every penal trial lies the effort to determine the factual basis of the charges in the indictment. The court does this by weighing the evidence according to the ground rules set forth in the Rules of Judicial Procedure in Penal Cases (the StPO). In the following section, we shall examine how the Auschwitz Trial court handled the hearing of evidence.

The charges against the defendants in this trial were of the most diverse kind. Some of them were accused of murdering, as well as maltreating, individual prisoners and small groups of prisoners. Even taking part in the execution of death sentences pronounced by summary courts counted as complicity in murder. But the main charge against nearly all the defendants was that they had participated in some way or other in the "mass gassing" of Jews. In most cases, this accusation was limited to their participation in "selections," the sole purpose of which was allegedly to pick "gas chamber victims." Some were also accused of taking victims to the "gas chambers" or even supervising the administration of the "gassing agent" Zyklon B.[584]

The charge relating to direct or indirect participation in "gassings" was, of course, predicated on the assumption that "gas chambers" really existed at Auschwitz-Birkenau. As we have seen in the course of our inquiry, that has yet to be proved. The "gas chamber" allegation is precisely the point that should have been subjected to the closest scrutiny during the trial, but the court —and everybody else involved in [259] these proceedings— acted as though the research of contemporary historians had long since confirmed it as an indisputable fact. Despite the many absurdities and contradictions in the "gas chamber" legend, none of the trial participants ever questioned the physical existence or the technical feasibility of the alleged gas chambers. Even the defendants and their attorneys were careful not to cast doubt on the "gas chamber" legend. We cannot stress this point too much. For it was their position on this matter which resulted in, or, at least, contributed to, the shoddy argumentation in this trial.

Here again, we are reminded of a similarity between the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial and the show trials the Allies staged after the war. In the Nuremberg trials, the basic rule was that a "fact of common knowledge" did not require proof. It was enough for the court to take "judicial notice" thereof.[585] The same device was employed in the Auschwitz Trial. Since the post-war "re-education" of the German people, founded on Zionist and Bolshevik atrocity propaganda, had made the "gas chamber" legend into a "fact of common knowledge," the judges in the Auschwitz Trial had to take "judicial notice" of it, in a certain sense, since otherwise they would have been subjected to the most grievous professional disadvantages and personal attacks. Thus they set great store by evidence tending to prove that the defendants had performed certain tasks at the Auschwitz camp. Both from the standpoint of morality and penal law, these actions were in themselves usually quite neutral. Only with the tacit or express agreement of the trial participants could they be construed as

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[584] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 16ff.; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 163ff., 213ff., 249ff., 258ff., 367ff., 435ff., 485ff., 509ff., 543ff., 561ff. and vol. 2, pp. 599ff., 643ff., 701ff., 709ff., 763ff., 773ff., 785ff., 793ff.

[585] See Article 21 of the "London Agreement" of August 8, 1945 which is the basis for the Allied post-war trials; cited by Walendy, *Die Methoden der Umerziehung*, p. 10.

complicity in "crime." The putative "crimes" themselves were seldom, if ever, put to the test of proof.

Given these circumstances, it may seem superfluous to delve any further into the nature of the evidence presented to the Auschwitz Trial court and the use that was made of it. However, we shall briefly consider these matters in the next few pages, since they shed additional light on the show trial character of the proceedings.

Depositions from Experts

Depositions from expert witnesses are defined as evidence in the Rules of Judicial Procedure in Penal Cases (§§72ff. StPO). According to Langbein, no less than twelve consultant depositions were submitted in the Auschwitz Trial.[586] For the most part, they dealt with particular issues that are irrelevant to our inquiry. The most important consultative depositions in the trial are generally considered to be those of the experts on contemporary history. After the trial, they were published under the auspices of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in two volumes entitled *Anatomie des SS-Staates*. This collection of documents contains the following depositions:

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Dr. Hans Buchheim: "Die SS-das Herrschaftsinstrument" ("The SS-Instrument of Domination") and "Befehl und Gehorsam" ("Command and Obedience");

Dr. Martin Broszat: "Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager 1933-1945" ("National Socialist Concentration Camps, 1933-45");

Dr. Hans-Adolf Jacobsen: 'Kommissarbefehl und Massenexecutionen sowjetischer Kriegsgefangener' (The Commissar Order and Mass Executions of Soviet Russian Prisoners of War");

Dr. Helmut Krausnick: "Judenverfolgung im Dritten Reich" ("The Persecution of the Jews in the Third Reich").

According to Dr. Laternser, Broszat also contributed a deposition on "National Socialist Polish Policy," but it is not to be found in the published collection.[587]

From the very titles of the deposition, one can tell that they have little, if anything, to do with the main issue in the Auschwitz Trial or the alleged deeds of the defendants. The closer one studies these depositions, the more this impression is confirmed. To give but an example: Less than four printed pages of Krausnick's 165-page deposition are devoted to the "gas chambers" of Auschwitz-Birkenau -the keystone of the extermination legend. What is more, in his treatment of this subject that "expert" relied largely on the memoirs Höss purportedly composed in a Cracow prison, which we have already shown to be completely inaccurate, indeed, possibly a forgery (see pp. 196ff. above). Thus Laternser is quite right when he says these depositions were "made in a vacuum" and "academic exercises so far as this trial is concerned."[588] Evidently

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[586] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 43, and vol. 2, pp. 973ff., 980, 986.

The expert Dr. Kuczinski, who was cited by the Soviet Zone accessory prosecutor Dr.Kaul, was dismissed on grounds of bias after he presented a deposition on "the interlocking of security police and economic interests in the establishment and operation of Auschwitz and its sub-camps." See Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 69 and Langbein, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 941. Here the court demonstrated only a seeming objectivity, because the other expert witnesses on contemporary history certainly showed no less "bias."

[587] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 83. Neither Langbein nor Laternser give much detail on the contents of the expert depositions. Bernd Naumann (*op. cit.*, pp. 156ff.) deals only with the deposition of Dr. Buchheim on the question of the compliance imperative.

[588] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

the court lost sight of the function of experts in a trial when it commissioned these depositions.

In German trial law, experts are defined as helpers of the court. Their task is simply to provide the court with technical information (e.g., as to pathology, psychiatry, toxicology, ballistics, or other such matters) which it may not have at its disposal but which has been shown in the course of the trial to be absolutely indispensable to a judicial decision. Such information must, therefore, concern matters that pertain more or less directly to the main issues in the trial or to the defendant himself. As a rule, the questions that may be asked of the experts are narrowly circumscribed by the court, and for the most part must focus on certain specific points. "General discourses" on subjects not directly related to the charges in the indictment —such as the Auschwitz Trial depositions mentioned above— do not contribute to the purposes of a trial and are thus inadmissible. Had the Auschwitz Trial really been an "ordinary criminal trial," this rule would have been observed. However, as we have seen, the instigators of these proceedings never intended them to be an "ordinary" trial. They had other objectives in mind, and it was those objectives, above all, that the court was obviously endeavouring to further when it decided what evidence would be heard. The admission of such depositions as those cited above can be explained only in terms of [261] the show trial nature of the proceedings, what Naumann calls their "ethical, social, and educative implications." These depositions were designed as a kind of crash course in the version of contemporary history the instigators of the Auschwitz Trial wished to have presented to the press, public, and, of course, any jurors or other trial participants who might not think exactly as they were supposed to about such matters.

Had the usual aims of a penal trial come first in these proceedings, the court would have thought it vital to consult a variety of experts on the questions presented by the extermination legend, if for no other reason than to gain an idea of the credibility of the witnesses and some of the documents. Here are a few such questions:

(1) How long did it take Zyklon B gas to work and what were its effects?

(2) How long did the gas remain active in a sealed room (without ventilation and/or with ventilation immediately after use)?

(3) Could one enter such a room without a gas mask thirty minutes after application of Zyklon B gas, as some insist?

(4) Could corpses be completely incinerated in a crematory oven within twenty minutes?

(5) Can crematory ovens be operated day and night without interruption?

(6) Can human bodies be incinerated in ditches a few meters deep, and, if so, in what length of time?

Obviously, the Auschwitz Trial court could not permit this heretical line of questioning. Had qualified experts been allowed to answer questions like these, most of the allegations made by the prosecution would have inevitably been demolished, the "eyewitnesses" to the "extermination of the Jews' exposed as liars, and the curtain would have fallen on the whole show. Nor did the

experts commissioned by the court volunteer any answers to such questions - after all, keeping the extermination legend alive was their bread and butter.[589]

It goes without saying that scholars representing a dissenting point of view were not even consulted in this trial. The French historian Professor Paul Rassinier, a former inmate of the Buchenwald and Dora concentration camps, who made a great contribution to bringing to light what actually happened in the camps, was not even allowed to attend the trial as a spectator. No doubt the forces behind the scenes were afraid of his keen intellect and ready pen.[590]

If the historical aspects of the concentration camp question were indeed at issue in this trial, nothing could have been more appropriate than to bring in Rassinier, a man who had intensively studied the matter for well over a decade, as a consultant. The thorough and deliberate exclu[262]sion of experts whose views were known to diverge from the official doctrine is just one more bit of evidence that the extermination legend was an inviolable taboo in this trial. The court made no exceptions.

In brief, we can say that in the Auschwitz Trial "experts" were carefully picked to insure the "correct" historical backdrop for the show. The court did not simply fail to oppose this manoeuvre on the part of the stage manager but aided it. The numerous and lengthy depositions presented by the "experts" from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, which is devoted to the "re-education" of the German people, in no way served the purpose of evidence. Their "findings" were either immaterial or inadequately documented, though all the trial participants —especially the judges— proceeded on the assumption they were pertinent and factual.[591] In this trial, depositions from experts were reduced to the status of theatrical props.

Documents

In general, documentary evidence constitutes the surest and most reliable mode of proof, that is, assuming that the document in question is of indisputable authenticity and contains relevant information about a particular issue in the case. A written document becomes part of the argumentation in a legal proceeding when it is read into the record (§249 StPO). From the standpoint of penal jurisprudence, anything that expresses an idea is considered a "document," whatever its material substance, whatever its form,

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[589] The American historian David Hoggan maintains that the institute is being supported by Rockefeller: *Der Unnötige Krieg*, p. 275. In any case, there can hardly be a doubt about the completely one-sided «orientation" of the Institut für

Zeitgeschichte. This appears not only in its publications, but also in the remarks of members of the institute. On this see Sündermann, *Das Dritte Reich* (revised edition, 1964), p. 17. See also Walendy, *Methoden der Umerziehung*, pp. 30ff. and Stäglich, *Historiker oder Propagandisten?*.

[590] Rassinier's works carry particular weight because they combine honesty in scholarship and personal experience of the concentration camps.

[591] This goes for the question of whether there was a Führer order for the extermination of Jews, and also for the questions of whether Auschwitz was an institution established especiaäy for the extermination of Jews and whether it had the installations (gas chambers) requisite for the task. The experts proceeded from these assumptions from the start, without being able to substantiate them with irreproachable sources. On this see again the general considerations on the reliability of the sources presented up to now by the so-called contemporary historians in regard to the extermination of jaws (Chapter One, pp. 16ff.).

and whatever it means of expressing that idea.[592] Only written documents played a role in the Auschwitz Trial. As evidence for the extermination thesis, none of these documents went beyond anything we have encountered in the course of our inquiry. That is simply another way of saying they furnished no proof at all of gassings or gas chambers at Auschwitz. To review them here would be a waste of time, but a few supplementary remarks may be in order.

When Langbein writes, in the commentary to his collection of documentary material on the Auschwitz Trial, that a "wealth of documents" were read in evidence during the proceedings, he is apparently seeking to give the impression that copious proof of the extermination thesis —in the particularly reliable form of written documents— was produced at this trial.[593] Nothing could be further from the truth. Leaving aside the possibility that Langbein has grossly exaggerated the quantity of documentary evidence, one notes that the overwhelming majority of documents presented at the trial were only of secondary importance insofar as the "gas chamber" question is concerned, that is, they did not bear directly on the alleged gassings or gas chambers. What is more, he counts as "documents" even the depositions of deceased or absent witnesses, of which there were a great many. Under certain circumstances, the reading in evidence of a deposi[263]tion may serve as a substitute for the usual cross-examination of the witness during a trial. Of course, all it proves is that a certain witness made certain statements about certain subjects; it does not prove whether those statements are true or false. Such documents are in and of themselves no more proof that the witness' statements are factual than is any other form of oral testimony. In fact, they have even less probative value than oral testimony, since one cannot form a personal impression of the witness, something that is very important when it comes to evaluating testimony.

What we have said here about written depositions applies particularly to the court-ordered reading in evidence of interrogation transcripts from the "Belsen Trial" the British occupation forces conducted in 1946. The depositions in question are those of the Birkenau commandant Josef Kramer and the Auschwitz camp physicians Dr. Fritz Klein and Dr. Friedrich Entress.[594] Although it may seem nearly incredible that as late as the middle 1960's a German court would still use as evidence transcripts from military trials held during the foreign occupation, since by then there could no longer be any doubt that the defendants in those "trials" were frequently subjected to inhuman and illegal treatment, it was an irregularity quite typical of the Auschwitz Trial. Any testimony from those "trials" that gassings occurred at Auschwitz was either obtained under duress or simply forged. Given the circumstances under which those "trials" took place, no evidence from them could be regarded as having any probative value whatsoever.[595] The admission of such "evidence" had nothing to do with justice or fact-finding, and only in a show trial would it have been possible.

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[592] Löwe-Rosenberg, footnote 3 to Section 249 StPO.

[593] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 43.

[594] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 949 and 983. On the conflicting statements of Kramer, see again footnote 35 to Chapter 3, above.

[595] A very informative report, by a British journalist, concerning the brutal treatment of imprisoned SS personnel was published in *Nation Europa*, Nr. 5/1968. See also Heinz Roth, *Was geschah nach 1945?*, part 2, pp. 70f.

Great importance was attributed to the so-called Broad Report (see pp. 145ff, 164ff above) and the memoirs Rudolf Höss allegedly composed while in a Cracow prison.[596] The complete text of the former, and sections of the latter, were read in evidence. In the case of both these documents, the court had only photocopies[597] to go by. Now, documentary argumentation may certainly be conducted with the aid of photocopies, but considering how suspect these documents are, one is astonished that the court was satisfied merely with reproductions, even though a few "experts" vouched for the authenticity of the "documents." As we have seen, the photocopy of the "Broad Report" presented at the trial was a reproduction of a typescript of the hand-written "original," and the only "corroboration" of its identity with that "original" was some highly dubious witness testimony (see pp. 213ff above).[598] As for the Höss memoirs, the court was satisfied with the expert Broszat's "credible assurance" that the copies he presented were faithful reproductions of the "originals" kept under lock and key in Poland.[599] It never occurred to the judges to ask whether the "original notes" were themselves genuine.[600] Here we see once again that the crucial question in this whole trial —namely the alleged existence of gas chambers at [264] Auschwitz— never really became the subject of argumentation, but was accepted from the outset as an established "historical fact." Otherwise one would necessarily have given some consideration to the authenticity of the Höss memoirs, parts of which were important for the evaluation of that question. As for the rest of their contents, they had no bearing on the issues in this trial.

The reading in evidence of these two "documents," which do not contain a word implicating any of the defendants in the alleged murder of Jews, could have only the purpose of arousing emotions —with the aid of appropriate press coverage— in order to strengthen the popular image of Auschwitz as a huge Meath factory." Thus they were really not evidence at all, but simply a means of producing a demonstrative effect, in true show trial fashion. In show trials of every kind, such means are commonly employed to create a mood that will facilitate public indoctrination. A court that felt its first duty was to truth and justice would, at very least, have regarded documents so obscure in both origin and content with a critical eye. The Auschwitz Trial court did not bother to question even their formal authenticity.

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[596] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 141ff.; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 537. See also Langbein, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 87, 105f., 120f., 133ff., 139, 146, 229f. and 358f. For Höss, see Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 949 and 952.

[597] Löwe-Rosenberg, Note 4 to Section 249 StPO.

[598] The witness Rothmann is not mentioned in the opinion. According to Langbein (*op. cit.*, p. 537) it was Rothmann who turned over the copy of the Broad report which was later read in court. The reading of this "document" —as Langbein assures us— made "a lasting impression on everyone" (*op. cit.*, p. 538). More than this was probably not intended because the "document" did not deal with the actual "crimes" of the individual defendants.

[599] Page 87 of the Opinion. The page numbers are cited in conformity with the published judgment of the Frankfurt Court of Assizes.

[600] It is self-explanatory that reading the original and not the reading of the copy of a document is needed to establish that the document is genuine. In every normal trial, an expert would have called to evaluate questionable documents such as the Höss writings. The expert would scarcely have been satisfied with investigating a photocopy. According to a decision by the Superior Court of Brunswick, an expert puts his professional knowledge in question if he depends solely on photocopies, when he could obtain the original documents (*Neue juristische Wochenschrift* 1953, p. 1035; *Juristen-Zeitung* 1953, p. 515). See also Löwe-Rosenberg, note 5a to Section 93 StPO.

Physical Evidence

Another aspect of argumentation, less strictly defined and regulated by law than witness testimony, consultations, documents, and interrogations, is the inspection of physical evidence, known in German legalese as Augenschein.[601] Above all, this term denotes the inspection of the scene of the crime and the examination of such exhibits as weapons, tools, articles of clothing, and other material objects connected with the crime or the criminal. Under the same general heading comes the viewing of photographs and locale sketches, likewise the hearing of tape recordings; in short, the scrutiny of any relevant physical evidence. As a mode of proof, physical evidence - if genuine - can be no less effective than documentary evidence in accurately reconstructing the sequence of events in a crime and in establishing the identity of the culprit beyond a reasonable doubt.

On June 8, 1964, the 53rd day of the trial, Accessory Prosecutor Henry Ormond requested a "site inspection of Auschwitz, the scene of the crime," explaining that not even the best sketches and slides could serve as a substitute for personal impression of the "extermination camp."[602] Apparently the exhibits to which he was referring were the plans of the camp displayed in the courtroom and the scale-model of a gas chamber which the Polish Auschwitz Museum had supplied for the trial.

For procedural reasons, the inspection of physical evidence can take place only before a full court and with all trial participants in attendance.[603] Evidently the court had some misgivings about that. In any case, on October 22, 1964, it issued a ruling that only one member [265] of the tribunal, District Court Justice Hotz, would undertake a site inspection of the former concentration camp at Auschwitz, provided an agreement could be reached between Bonn and Warsaw. This site inspection took place from December 14 to 16, 1964. The rest of the trial participants were given leave to visit Auschwitz at their own discretion. Only the fourteen defendants who remained in custody were denied permission to travel to Auschwitz. Besides Justice Hotz, all four prosecuting attorneys and the three accessory prosecutors took part. However, only thirteen defence attorneys —not even half of the defence team— "nd only one of the six defendants who remained at liberty, Dr. Lucas, went along. From the very beginning, the defence attorney Laternser energetically opposed the site inspection. His objections to it were pertinent indeed. In his argument of June 22, 1964, he pointed out that not only must "natural changes have given the place an entirely different appearance" in the course of twenty years, but that the camp had also been "turned into a museum," which involved "extensive renovations" and "tendentious amplifications.[604]

He was absolutely right. We have already seen, for example, that the crematorium in the Auschwitz parent camp was "restored" to its present state by the Poles after the war, at which time the purported "gas chambers" were added (see p. 51f. above). No doubt the Soviet occupation forces and the Polish authorities made many other changes in the camp and its environs during the

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[601] Löwe-Rosenberg, note 2 to Seetion 86 StPO.

[602] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 149; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, p. 41.

[603] Löwe-Rosenberg, note 6a to Section 86 StPO.

[604] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 149, 184, 186, 208ff.; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 837ff.; Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 48f., 411ff.

ten-year period when they had the area cordoned off to outsiders. It is quite possible that the Frankfurt Assize Court had no detailed information about these alterations. Nevertheless, the court should have taken into consideration the fact that the changes time had wrought made it unlikely that a site inspection would yield any reliable evidence, as Dr. Laternser noted.

Since site inspection was not to be used in evidence at the trial, the pseudo-site inspection undertaken by one member of the tribunal was a procedural superfluity and plainly reflected judicial opportunism. The report on this visit to Auschwitz was, in fact, entered into the record. Thus, through the circuitous route of documentary evidence, a legally questionable site inspection ultimately became part of the argumentation.

This site inspection did not yield anything important enough to justify its expense. There is no indication in the Auschwitz Trial opinion that it was absolutely essential to the verdict, which would have been its only possible justification.

It did, however, contribute to the acquittal of the defendant Arthur Breitwieser, since it gave the lie to the only witness against him. This witness had claimed he saw Breitwieser at a gassing of inmates in the "Bunker." But the site inspection revealed that the "witness" could not have observed the defendant at the stated place. Between the "Bunker" and his alleged observation point stood a building that would have [266] blocked his line of vision. In fact, even if the building had not existed at the time, his claim should have been dismissed out of hand, for he asserted that he had recognized the defendant at a distance of 70 to 80 meters - at night![605]

Still, the site inspection gave the journalists who went along for the ride a good opportunity to intensify the effect of the show trial with emotion-laden, melodramatic reports, of which Bernd Naumann's outpourings in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* are but one example.[606] Langbein, who called the "inspection of the place" an "important event in the trial," opined:

> It made a deeper and more lasting impression on everybody who participated than any documents and testimony could have done. Judge Hotz, the only member of the tribunal who made the trip to Poland, took a considerably more active part in the cross-examination after his return. Auschwitz and Birkenau also gave some of the defence attorneys food for thought.[607]

That the tour influenced the thinking of the defence may very well be true. Quite possibly, the aim of this whole business was to "soften up" the defence attorneys, or at least a few of them. Of course, it is doubtful that those who toured Auschwitz-Birkenau could have gained much of an idea of what the camp was really like when it was in operation. Leaving aside Laternser's cautiously phrased remarks, nobody bothered to call attention to this fact, which, in an "ordinary criminal trial," would have been thought worthy of mention.

just as questionable as the site inspection itself was the display of pictures in the courtroom for evidential purposes. Nobody asked whether the ground plans of the camp were authentic or on the basis of what data the scale-

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[605] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 71f., 116, 283; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 787ff., 791f., 898.

[606] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 210ff., who gave his writing the doleful title *Keine Spur mehr von Millionen Füßen* [Millions of Feet-Gone Without a Trace]. The title is doubtless also intended to give some indication of the number of victims (2-4 million)!

[607] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 41.

model of a gas chamber was constructed. That these exhibits came from the Polish State Auschwitz Museum was presumably considered proof enough of their genuineness, though, of course, the opposite should have been the case. It is significant that the court and its helpers —as Langbein quipped with idiotic self-satisfaction— "found their way around" those ground plans of Auschwitz better than many witnesses who had been interned at the camp. Only a single witness was on hand to explain the gas chamber model.[608] Naturally, he swore to its accuracy —that was the purpose for which he had been summoned from Poland. Langbein went so far as to emphasize the importance of this witness in the following terms:

> Only from his testimony did the full significance of the model become apparent.

Rather than rely on the claims of this witness, the court would have done well to demand that the data used for the construction of this "scale-model" be placed at its disposal, or even have the model-maker testify on the specifications from which he worked. But nobody involved in this grotesque trial seems to have thought of that.
[267]

Witness Testimony

All the evidence we have examined thus far was designed to produce the politically demonstrative effect so fervently desired by the promoters of the Auschwitz Trial. It contributed hardly anything to establishing the guilt or innocence of the accused, which rested for the most part upon witness testimony, which was even more of a problem here than it is in other trials. In its judgement, the court itself complained that the available factual information was thoroughly inadequate to determine the veracity of the testimony in this trial:

> The court lacked almost all of the means normally used in homicide trials to piece together a picture of what actually happened. There were no corpses of the victims, no autopsies, no testimony from experts on the cause and time of death, no clues regarding the murderers, no murder weapons, etc. Only in rare instances was it possible to ascertain the validity of the witnesses' testimony.[609]

This statement is revealing indeed. It shows the whole procedural dilemma of this trial. Noteworthy is the court's admission that no traces of the legendary gas chambers are to be found in Auschwitz —at least, that is how one might interpret the rather vague statement about the absence of murder weapons and so forth, since most of the defendants were accused of complicity in murders by gassing. Nonetheless, the court even acted as though the existence of such gas chambers were an incontrovertible historical fact, and so did not see any need to scrutinize witness testimony on that point.

More than a year was required to take the depositions of the 409 witnesses. Of these 248 were former inmates of Auschwitz, 91 had been members of the SS, and 70 did not belong to either group.[610] Naturally, the overwhelming majority of these people, including some of the former SS men,

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[608] On this see Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 35f.

[609] Page 109 of the Opinion.

[610] See Langbein's (*Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 937ff.) detailed, chronological account of the trial proceedings. Langbein's documentation includes the testimonies of 153 former inmates, 43 members of the SS, and 37 others. The selection is of course biased toward the Auschwitz legend (*op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 15, 43ff.).

were witnesses for the prosecution.[611] Just as in the Nuremberg trials, the defence had a hard time obtaining witnesses. Potential defence witnesses living in the Eastern Bloc were not able to get exit visas, since the authorities in those countries did not —as Laternser was able to prove in some cases— see the necessity of their testifying in a trial conducted by a German court.[612] And if such witnesses were eventually able to obtain a visa, or gave their depositions in their native lands, one could be sure they had become "turn coats" and would testify against the accused.[613] As one would expect, German witnesses for the defence were extremely reserved, to say the least, in their testimony.

In this context, we should return to the problem of the reliability of witness testimony per se (see Chapter Three, Section I; pp. 107ff. above). Let it be repeated that witness testimony is generally the least reliable mode of evidence. That is why it is so important that all witness testimony be scrutinized in the light of known and certain facts. The Auschwitz Trial court had - as it admitted - hardly any possibility of do[268]ing this. What is more, it evidently did not dare cast doubt on the testimony of foreign witnesses for the prosecution. On this point Laternser remarks:

They appeared before the court, gave their testimony —the origins of, and motives behind, which could not be checked— and departed for home. Their testimony involved almost no practical responsibility. However, the fact that a witness must bear responsibility for his testimony is a very important factor in the evaluation of it. In the view of the defence, a lot of these witnesses gave the impression that they did not think they needed to be too particular about what they said against "beasts in human shape," as a large section of the press called the defendants.

How much time and effort is devoted in a normal penal trial to determining the accuracy and origins of witness testimony! In the Auschwitz Trial, only the attorneys for the defence made the effort... It seemed as though the other trial participants accepted the testimony of foreign witnesses at face value. And one received the impression that the prosecution was determined to prevent by any means detailed and thorough questioning of foreign witnesses. To an extreme degree, the accessory prosecutors took the side of these foreign witnesses. Sorry to say, the court sustained the overwhelming majority of the objections the prosecution and accessory prosecution raised to questions asked by the defence. Thus most of the attempts to defend the accused were rendered futile.[614]

Once again we are faced with the inescapable conclusion that the attitude of the court and the prosecution fit in perfectly with the general

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[611] The former SS man Richard Böck, who belonged to the Auschwitz motor pool, where he served as a driver, was an important SS witness. His in part fantastic statements are often quoted in the literature, in which occasional contradictions surface: compare on one hand Kaul, *Arzte in Auschwitz* (p. 245), and on the other Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, (vol. 1, p. 74). Not long ago Röck appeared on television in an English series entitled "World at War," which was broadcast by the German 3rd Television Network in the spring of 1978 under the title «Welt im Krieg. » According to a letter (dated June 15, 1978) by the English producer to the author, Böck is an "honorable member" of the "Association of Former Auschwitz-Inmates"!

[612] *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 42f., 11 lf.

[613] One gets this impression from Langbein's description: See *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 42f.

[614] *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 85ff.

pattern of a show trial, in which the objective is not to discover the truth but to produce a politically demonstrative effect.

These observations do not apply to foreign witnesses only. German witnesses were not sounded out, either, if they gave the "correct" testimony. If they did not, they ran the risk of being arrested right in the courtroom.[615] On the other hand, foreign witnesses who had obviously committed perjury had nothing to fear. In its opinion, the court tried to dispel the impression that it was wanting in vigilance or objectivity. At the end of the previously quoted passage on the lack of factual information available to it, the court stated:

> For this reason, the credibility of witnesses had to be carefully checked... Whenever certain witnesses seemed to be inclined to telling fantastic tales, whether from a desire to show off or some other such motive... the court did not make use of their testimony at all.

These fine phrases were intended to suggest to the reader that the court thoroughly checked all testimony. In practice, however, it gave credence to witnesses whose testimony was utterly nonsensical. Here are just a few examples —we could cite many more.

For a start, let us take another look at Dr. Konrad Morgen, a person with whom we have already dealt in our discussion of the Nuremberg IMT Trial. In testifying about his visit to the "Birkenau extermination camp" at the "end of 1943 or the beginning of 1944," he made the following statement:

[269]

> In the enormous crematorium everything was spick-and-span. There was nothing whatsoever to indicate that just the night before thousands of people had been gassed and incinerated there. Nothing was left of them, not even a speck of ash on the cremation equipment.[616]

We recall that when Dr. Morgen testified at the Nuremberg IMT Trial he described Monowitz as the "extermination camp" (seep. 132ff. above). That he later tailored his version of the extermination legend to fit current fashion apparently did not move the court to question his credibility. But even the rest of his statement has all the earmarks of mendacity. There is no way in the world that thousands of people could be so thoroughly "exterminated" in a single night that "not even a speck of ash on the cremation equipment" was left to tell the tale.

None of Morgen's testimony, by the way, concerned any alleged deeds of the defendants.[617] He incriminated nobody directly. Hence one may rightly call him a mere bit player in the Auschwitz Trial "show."

Another witness whose lack of credibility is obvious —at least to those who have any familiarity with the literature on Auschwitz— was Dr. Rudolf Vrba, who was brought over from England for the trial. (On the character and alleged experiences of the Auschwitz "eyewitness," see pp. 9M, 160ff above.) If one may give credence to the documentary volumes on the trial, Vrba avoided going into tangible details, nor did the court question him about the contradictions and discrepancies in his earlier, written accounts. Above all, his

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[615] This happened to the German witness Walter, former SS Hauptscharführer in Auschwitz. He was set free only after he had made a "correction" to his testimony while in prison. See Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 219ff., 314, and vol. 2, pp. 955, 981; Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 58f., 110f.

[616] Quoted after Langbein, *Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 144; see also Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

[617] Morgen reported about his former work as SS judge, especially about his investigations into cases of corruption which he claimed to have conducted in Auschwitz in 1944/45. See Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 143f., 243f., 335f. and Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 111ff.

accusations were directed against the defendant Robert Mulka. Solely on the basis of the testimony of this notorious liar, Mulka was remanded in custody, though he had been released a few months before on account of his failing health.[618] Thus it seems the court regarded even this teller of fantastic tales as a credible witness. Here we shall not go into the question of whether the court did not dare question the credibility of this witness, or whether it was simply ignorant of his literary productions. In the latter case, the worst that could be said is that the judges were ill-prepared for their duties in this trial.

A particularly neat example of how unquestioningly the court accepted any inculpating testimony, no matter how far-fetched, is the case of the Czech witness Filip Müller. According to his own account, he was a member of the *Sonderkommando* for the crematoria. (In his book *I Cannot Forgive*, Vrba claimed that Müller worked in one of the crematoria as a "stoker" and, therefore, was in a position to estimate the number of corpses burnt from the amount of fuel consumed!)[619] Surprisingly, Müller —again by his own account— tells us that he worked in the *Sonderkommando* for the crematoria from 1942 on, that is to say, he escaped what was - so the extermination legend goes - the usual fate of *Sonderkommando* workers: Every three or four months, they, too, were "gassed and cremated," for "security reasons." Though he failed to give a convincing explanation for his survival, he was otherwise quite talkative.[620]
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For example, this frustrated martyr told of giant pits, near crematorium IV, in which corpses were incinerated. He described them as follows:

> The 120-foot-long, 18-to-24-foot-wide, 7-to-8-foot-deep pits had indentations at one end into which the human fat ran off. The prisoners had to pour this fat over bodies so that they might burn more easily.

Further, he claimed that the "boss of the crematorium," SS~ Oberscharführer Moll, would "take a child from its mother, carry it over to Crematory IV, which had two big pits, and throw the child into the seething fat." He also had something to say about "experiments" conducted in the crematoria. Once a "hunchback was put into a tub containing various chemical salts and acids, in order to obtain his skeleton." Also, SS men "cut flesh from the thighs of people shot in the crematories." For what possible reason that might have been done, this witness was at a loss to explain.

Any commentary on this "testimony" would be superfluous. One must say that it is astonishing that seasoned judges would even listen to such utter - and in part, physically impossible - nonsense, when they should have immediately struck it from the record. Yet even though this man's tendency to tell fantastic tales was patent, the court never expressed any fundamental doubts about his credibility, and, what is more, even based its conviction of three defendants —Stark, Lucas, and Frank— on some of his stories.[621]

Even these few examples are sufficient to warrant the conclusion that the credibility of witnesses was not so carefully checked by the court as the previously cited passage from its opinion would have us believe. In the case of

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[618] Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 77f., 122ff., 198; Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

[619] Vrba, *op. cit.*, p. 200f.

[620] See on this and the following Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 86f., 88f., 91, 131ff., 424f., 459ff.; vol. 2, pp. 499, 549, 569f., 698f.; Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 181ff.

[621] Pages 116, 254 and 472 of the verdict. See also Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 884f., 889 and 893.

foreign witnesses, its dread of casting doubt on testimony incriminating the defendants was perfectly obvious.

Hence it ignored the fact that most of the witnesses for the prosecution were in some way dependent on, or influenced by, various interested parties. Dr. Laternser has brought to fight numerous examples of the coaching and virtual subornation of witnesses.[622] Perhaps his most damning discovery was that the International Auschwitz Committee sent information sheets to all these witnesses, to help them "orient themselves." Besides containing allegations about the overall situation in Auschwitz, they listed the purported crimes of the defendants, gave personal information about them-including photographs-and even their seat numbers in the courtroom.[623] Given such a state of affairs, it is simply incredible that the court was able to attach any significance at all to the professed recognition of a defendant by a former inmate. To be sure, this bit of judicial laxity was quite in keeping with the general pattern of a show trial.

Here we shall only note in passing that the testimony of many of these witnesses was, despite the most intensive "coaching," extremely con[271]tradictory. If the reader thinks it worth his while, he may confirm this himself by consulting the volumes of documents on the trial, from which, presumably, the most drastic contradictions have been expunged. In this respect, the literature on the Auschwitz Trial presents the same familiar picture as the literature on the Auschwitz camp itself.

A very significant datum in determining whether or not these proceedings were a show trial is the fact that many witnesses for the prosecution did not stick to testifying in regard to the alleged crimes of the individual defendants, but wandered off into digressions about general conditions at the camp or alleged personal experiences having little or nothing to do with specific points in the indictment. Again we see that the main purpose was to achieve a politically demonstrative effect. In this case, it was facilitated, even promoted, by the presiding judge, who, as superintendent of the proceedings, could have called a halt to such meanderings the moment they started, as was incumbent upon him to do.[624]

So far as witness testimony is concerned, perhaps the clearest evidence that we are dealing with a show trial is the fact that the first three ex-inmates who testified gave the court-as Langbein notes with obvious satisfaction -"only a general survey." These were the witnesses Otto Wolken, Ella Lingens-Reiner, and Hermann Langbein himself, who was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Auschwitz Trial. For two whole sessions, Otto Wolken stood in the witness-box and recited to the court a series of totally unverifiable atrocity stories about camp conditions, some of them well-known, others obscure. All were obviously intended to fuel the claim that Auschwitz was an extermination camp, but completely unrelated to any specific charges against

[622] *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 85ff. In his account of the trial Langbein tries mightily to dismiss the accusation that witnesses were influenced as unjustifiable, or at least to weaken it. He cannot, however, disregard the fact, proved by letters, that Polish witnesses were invited to contact the International Auschwitz Committee in Warsaw and the Polish Chief Commission for the prosecution of Nazi crimes before travelling to Germany.

[623] *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 91ff.

[624] See on this Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

the defendants.[625] The witnesses Lingens-Reiner and Langbein gave similar performances. When, at last, Dr. Laternser rather cautiously admonished Langbein to keep his testimony to the point, the presiding judge turned a deaf ear to his plea, and let the witness ramble on.[626]

More than anything else, what put the stamp of a show trial on these proceedings was the fact that so much of the testimony consisted of broad statements —"general discourse"— lacking any tangible point of reference to the alleged crimes of the defendants. There can be no doubt that one aim of a show trial is to implant in the public mind certain notions, demands, or —as is particularly true of concentration camp trials— unfounded guilt feelings. Nothing, it seems, could be better suited to attain this aim than impressing a large number of average citizens with testimony making a purely emotional appeal for the message one wishes to get across. No doubt it was with the view in mind that the International Auschwitz Committee and similar groups went about providing a supply of well-coached witnesses for the trial, something that may be unparalleled in the history of German [272] jurisprudence. Through an orchestrated mass media campaign, the tales of these "witnesses" were represented as incontrovertible fact to those who were unable to attend the trial. Here we see the extensive "social, ethical, and educative implications" of the Auschwitz Trial, to use the phrase coined by the courtroom journalist Bernd Naumann.

Langbein has claimed that the picture of Auschwitz that emerged from the witness testimony at this trial is of "historical value" and will "provide source material for the historians of the future."[627] Leaving aside the content of this testimony, his claim must be disputed simply on the basis of the manipulations disclosed by Dr. Laternser, who was in general hardly critical of the Auschwitz Myth.

Not one witness could describe beyond a reasonable doubt how a gas chamber looked and operated. Even to the Auschwitz "expert" Langbein that was perfectly obvious. With regard to the Birkenau crematoria, he admitted: "Only very little of what happened in these, the largest, buildings in the Auschwitz camp can be recounted by witnesses today."[628]

In other words, none of the witnesses ever had a good look inside the walls of the buildings in which the extermination of the Jews supposedly took place. The lone witness who explained the scale model of a "gas chamber" from the Auschwitz Museum (see p. 266 above) is certainly no proof to the contrary. It may be worth noting that Langbein does not tell us either the man's name or occupation, and Naumann does not mention him at all. Presumably he was an employee of the Auschwitz Museum, whose only knowledge of "gas chambers"

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[625] Wolken was a medical doctor in Vienna. According to his statement he was "deported as a Jew" to Auschwitz (Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 98). The Austrian lawyer and historian Dr. Scheidl, however, insists that Wolken was sent to the camp for the criminal offences of rape and abortion. On this account he was also deprived of his M.D. See Scheidl, *Geschichte der Verfemung Deutschlands*, vol. 4, pp. 168f. (based on the Deutsche Wochenzeitung of July 31, 1964, p. 4).

[626] Laternser, *op. cit.*, p. 34. See on all this also Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 98ff., 107ff.; fürther Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 39 and vol. 2, pp. 938f. (for the detailed content of the testimonies, see the given page numbers in Langbein's index, *op. cit.*).

[627] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, pp. 10 and 12.

[628] *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 1, p. 88.

was the scale-model, which undoubtedly was the product of someone's imagination.

This brings us to the end of our survey of the evidential material in the Auschwitz Trial. It was, as we have seen, Eke everything else in these proceedings, designed to serve the purposes of the producers of the show. That the show had its effect on the public cannot be denied. History proves, however, that the effect of all show trials is short-lived, and this will also hold true for the Auschwitz Trial.

In the next section, we shall examine how even the Auschwitz trial decision carried to absurd lengths the gas chamber legend based on this muddled testimony.

The Judgement

The judgement the Auschwitz trial as everything one would expect of a trial that was not conducted according to normal rules of penal jurisprudence, but staged as a political show. It was not so much a judicial decision as a recapitulation of the distorted picture of events drawn in the course of the proceedings. Not the verdict and sentencing, but rather the judicial opinion, was the essential product of this trial. The defendants were little more than waxwork figures in a chamber of horrors tableau designed to impress on the German and international public [273] the historicity of the extermination legend. With this verdict, the whole German people was convicted of —so the phrase goes— letting Auschwitz happen."

The panorama of horrors depicted in the court's written opinion loses some of its impact when one considers the disproportion between the sentences pronounced and the enormity of the alleged crime. Three of the defendants (Johann Schoberth, Arthur Breitwieser, and Dr. Willi Schatz) had to be acquitted since the "evidence" against them was not convincing enough even for this court. A particularly remarkable acquittal is that of Breitwieser, who was for some time the chief of the disinfection department of Auschwitz, which would have put him in charge of the men who allegedly introduced Zyklon B into the "gas chamber." As a practical matter, the acquittal of Breitwieser reduces to gas chamber allegation to absurdity. For in view of the fact that Breitwieser himself was "chief" of the "gassing detachment," the circumstance that it could not be proven —because of a most embarrassing breakdown in the stage management of the trials— that he had ever been present at a "gassing" (see pp. 265 above) strictly speaking ought not to have borne any weight in the matter at all. Presumably the acquittal was thus some kind of "Freudian slip" on the part of the court.[629]

Eleven of the defendants received limited prison sentences. Most of them were given credit for time served in pre-trial custody, and had only to serve the

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[629] If the alleged gassing of Jews really did take place, then Breitwieser must be regarded legally as at least as an accessory or even accomplice, because he was in charge of the Zyklon B as commander of the disinfection section and therefore must have been informed as to the use of this pesticide. According to the trial documentation, Breitwieser already occupied this position at the time the "gassing" allegedly began (October 1941). The use of Zyklon B as the killing agent would have required special training of the disinfectors, which could not have occurred without Breitwieser's knowledge.

For Breitwieser's testimony see Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 70ff. and Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, pp. 786ff., 791.

remaining time. In two cases, those of Emil Hantl and Herbert Scherpe, this meant the prisoners went free the moment after their sentences were passed.[630] It seems as though the purpose of such sentences was merely to forestall claims for indemnity. Hantl, by the way, was one of those defendants who exhibited the greatest "remorse," since he labelled not only Auschwitz, but also Mauthausen, as an "extermination camp" (see p. 332 above)!

Six defendants received fife sentences, and they were not even the ones who, according to the indictment, had the most murders on their conscience. This peculiar sentencing rested on a legal regulation then in effect: Someone who committed even just a single murder automatically incurred a life sentence, whereas the accessory to the murder could —but did not have to— receive a fighter sentence.[631] The defendant Emil Bednarek, a former Auschwitz trustee ("Kapo"), who, according to the verdict, killed 14 inmates with his own hands, received a life sentence, while the defendant Dr. Lucas, whom the court found guilty of "mere" aiding and abetting in the murder of at least 4,000 people in the "gas chambers" of Birkenau, got off with a sentence of three years and three months. Assuming for a moment the alleged murders did occur, no rational person could regard the gross disproportion in the severity of the sentences as just. Something that may have played a role in the sentencing of Dr. Lucas is that, throughout the trial, he accepted the extermination thesis and showed "remorse." In general, however, [274] the kind of sentences imposed on defendants accused of participation in large-scale "gas chamber" murders lead one to suspect that the court had its doubts —at least subconsciously— about whether these crimes actually occurred. Here we see the consequences, so baneful to the cause of justice, of the opportunistic attitude the court displayed throughout the trial.[632]

But now let us turn to the Auschwitz Trial opinion.

Even though the presiding judge stressed, in his oral opinion, that the "treatment of historical events" was not the proper task of the court, the written opinion, like the trial, dealt extensively with historical matters, instead of confining itself to determining whether the accused had committed legally punishable offences, as would have been the case in an ordinary criminal trial.[633] The trial opinions reflect the same general abnormality, the same specific anomalies, as the argumentation. They are often irrelevant, unrealistic, contradictory, and even illogical; last, but not least, they are just as unconvincing in their assessment of the defendant's guilt as the previously

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[630] Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 272f. and 279ff.; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 873ff., 900.

[631] This no longer applies today. According to Section 27, Paragraph 2 StGB, which replaced the former Section 49 StGB (on abetting), the punishment of the accomplice is to be reduced in every case according to the principles of mitigation. See Section 49, StGB, new version.

[632] See on the above Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 270ff., 287, 289; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 871ff., 889ff., 898f. Bednarek, a Volksdeutscher from Poland (Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 35), who was a political intemee at Auschwitz, is probably a trustee who behaved blamelessly during his interrunent and afterwards refused to serve the atrocity propaganda. Otherwise he would have never ended up in the dock with the accused. For all the hunate conurüttees - the International Auschwitz Conunittee in Vienna as well-are creations of the forrner hierarchy of camp inmates; one who cooperated with them was safe from persecution.

[633] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

mentioned sentences. In a manner of speaking, they are a mirror image of the whole show trial.[634]

The first section of the written opinion deals with "The Establishment and Development of Concentration Camps in the National Socialist State."[635] It is a general, overall view and has nothing to do with the main issues in the trial. The second section treats in great detail various aspects of the "Auschwitz Concentration Camp": its construction, organization, living conditions, and related matters.[636] Admittedly, some of this material might be of slight value in a legitimately conducted trial. However, what made all these elabourations so necessary was that they could be used —and this was the real aim of the Auschwitz show trial— to connect the alleged extermination of Jews at the camp with a "systematic murder program" created by the leadership of National Socialist Germany. More specific "findings" of this kind appear in the sections of the opinion dealing with the individual defendants and their supposed "crimes." For instance, in the section on the former camp adjutant Robert Mulka there is a lengthy discourse on the meaning of the so-called "selections," a term which the judges understood in the sense it is used in atrocity propaganda, and on the implementation of the "gassing of Jewish people" that purportedly followed them.[637]

For want of space, we cannot reproduce all the nonsense contained in these general findings of the court, but here are a few of the more choice bits.

The description of living conditions at Auschwitz contains the following statement: 1n Birkenau and its environs there was no drinking water. All the wells were contaminated with coliform bacteria."[638]

Had that been the case, then probably no human being could have survived even a month there. Nevertheless, there are masses of former inmates who were imprisoned in Birkenau for years. A few of them [275] appeared as witnesses in the Auschwitz Trial, which should have given the court pause for thought.[639] And, of course, the SS guards who lived there also could not get along without drinking water. All this is obvious, just as obvious as the mental laxity of the judges who lent their names to this statement.

The idea that human life was not worth much at Auschwitz runs like an unbroken thread through the entire opinion, and often enough is explicitly stated. It is all the more surprising, then, that in the second section of the opinion the court goes into the "Guidelines for the Treatment of Prisoners" laid down by Reichsführer SS Himmler, which were binding for all the concentration camps.[640] It even quotes, among other things, the following pledge of honour, which every SS member detached to Auschwitz had to sign:

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[634] Opinion, pp. 9ff.

[635] Opinion, pp. 23ff.

[636] Opinion, pp. 95ff.

[637] Opinion, p. 48.

[638] Auschwitz was evacuated in stages during January 1945. When the Soviets occupied Auschwitz, they found 4800 sick and non-ambulatory prisoners still in the (camp, who had been left behind under medical care by the SS. See *Anthologie*, vol. II, part 2, p. 120. There former interned physician, Otto Wolken, reports about the last days in Auschwitz-Birkenau, on pages 90ff. (Reprinted in Reports of the *International Federation of Resistance Fighters-F.I.R.* -Nr. 5/1974.)

[639] Opinion, p. 52.

[640] See the wording in the excerpts from the verbal opinion against Bednarek (in Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 289).

> Über Leben und Tod eines Staatsfeindes entscheidet der Führer. Kein Nationalsozialist ist daher berechtigt, Hand an einen Staatsfeind zu legen oder ihn körperlich zu mißhandeln. Bestraft wird jeder Häftling nur durch den Kommandanten.
>
> Life and death of an enemy of the State is decided by the Führer. Hence no National Socialist has a right to lay a hand on an enemy of the State or physically abuse hiin. Any punishment of an inmate is administered only under orders from the Commandant.

Later on in the opinion, it is pointed out that corporal punishment of inmates required permission from the Inspector of Concentration Camps, SS-Gruppenführer Richard Glücks, and, moreover, could be carried out only in the presence of a physician, who had to examine the physical condition of the prisoner beforehand. In the higher ranks of the SS —as the court notes on page 52 of the opinion— it was an unspoken law that an SS man did not strike or shove an inmate, indeed, even so much as touch him.

All this seems rather paradoxical for an "extermination camp." Not until later on in the opinion does it become clear exactly why the court chose to bring up these guidelines issued by the Reichsführer SS, which certainly do not fit into the general frame of reference of its judgement: The court needed them to establish the personal culpability of defendants accused by witnesses of having slain one or more inmates outside the "normal" "extermination program." If the defendant was not acting "on orders," but "against orders," that supposedly would be conclusive proof of criminal intent.[641] Of course, it is quite improbable that any SS man would have acted on his own in that way. In the Third Reich —especially in the ranks of the SS— discipline and obedience were the highest values, and infractions against them were ordinarily punished with the utmost severity. But this fact did not bother the court in the least. It even made the general assertion that SS officers, SS non-coms, and SS troops "constantly disobeyed" the guidelines for the treatment of prisoners and "not infrequently" maltreated inmates "to the point of death."[642] This "finding" of the court rests solely on witness testimony [276] and the consultations of "contemporary history experts." In the Auschwitz Trial, it was that easy to transform a fact contrary to the propaganda lies about Auschwitz into incriminating evidence.

A particularly embarrassing gaffe appears on pages 99-100 of the opinion. It shows just how little thought the judges gave the factual basis of the gas chamber theory. On page 99, the court asserts that the "disrobing and gassing areas" of crematoria I-IV were "underground, and the cremation ovens aboveground." On the very next page, it states that in crematoria III and IV the Zyklon B was introduced "via a small side window." Evidently two conflicting stories told by witnesses got mixed up here, and the court did not notice. The whole absurdity of the gas chamber legend could hardly be illustrated any better.

The general "findings" of the court on the "Auschwitz Concentration Camp" (section two of the opinion) are founded primarily on the "cogent and well-grounded depositions of the experts," as well as the memoirs Höss allegedly wrote in a Cracow prison and the Broad Report, the latter two of which contradict each other on many points.[643] We have already said what is necessary about the contents and quality of the expert witness depositions (see

[641] Opinion, p. 53.
[642] Opinion, p. 99.
[643] Opinion, pp. 85ff.

pp. 259-262 above). Likewise, our examination of the Höss memoirs and the Broad Report, elsewhere in this book (see pp. 164-168 and 196-216 above), has shown that these "documents" are highly dubious, both in origin and content. It is significant that the court's attempt to remove all doubt as to the authenticity and reliability of the Höss memoirs was a failure.

Apart from Broszat's corroboration of its authenticity (see p. 263 above), the judges considered the whole of the memoir allegedly written by the former Auschwitz commandant to be genuine because —as it stated in the opinion— the author must have been "a person very familiar with conditions in Auschwitz" and "commanded a view of not just a part of the camp, but all of it."[644] This may be true in a general way, but that does not affect the judges' assertions in regard to the parts of the memoir pertaining to the "extermination of the Jews." And they are precisely the parts that matter. Höss' statements are none the more believable for the court's insistence that Höss took pains to be exact and objective. With the accuracy of a bookkeeper, he depicted events in detail. Since those points on which his statements could be confirmed by witnesses were confirmed, the other facts in his memoirs also appeared to be credible and pertinent, except for a few dates about which the author did not seem to be entirely sure.[645]

Among the "facts" that the court regarded as "credible" and "pertinent" are that a single Birkenau crematory oven was capable of completely incinerating three corpses within twenty minutes, that one could enter a room without a gas mask a half hour after Zyklon B had been admin[277]istered, that thousands of corpses could be burnt to ashes in open pits without constant oxygenation and addition of fuel, and similar nonsense. When the court speaks here of "exactness," "objectivity," and the "accuracy of a bookkeeper," it only reveals its ignorance and credulity, if not opportunism. Did it really not occur to any of the judges that the witnesses who "confirmed" details of the statements attributed to Commandant Höss may have read the Höss memoirs, published in 1958, and gained their "knowledge" therefrom? And, after all, their contents merely corresponded to what had been appearing in the mass media for years, but especially during the period of the Auschwitz Trial. How can one believe that such "confirmation" has the slightest value?

Finally, let us take a look at the "crimes" of which the defendants were convicted. The purpose of a penal trial is, of course, to ascertain that a crime was committed, though the Auschwitz Trial —as we have seen— went above and beyond this modest goal. But, then, the Auschwitz Trial was no ordinary criminal trial. Of that there can no longer be any doubt.

A few of the defendants were convicted because, in the view of the court, it could be proved that they were guilty of maltreatment resulting in the death of inmates or of slaying inmates with intent. Perhaps one or two of these convictions were justified. Excesses of that kind in prisoner of war camps were nothing new, and no doubt they will occur again in the future. Since these convictions had nothing to do with the real Auschwitz question, namely, the alleged systematic murder of Jews in "gas chambers" as a result of orders from on high, we need not dwell on them. However, we should mention the fact that the court reckoned the shooting of hostages and summary executions as

[644] Opinion, pp. 86.
[645] Opinion, pp. 87.

"murder," as in the cases of the defendants Friedrich Wilhelm Boger, Hans Stark, Franz Johann Hofmann, and Oswald Kaduk.[646]

Another series of crimes that figure in the opinion were related to the alleged killing of inmates by means of the injection of phenol into the heart, known in Auschwitz inmate jargon as "Abspritzen."* This is also something that may actually have happened, but the court did not pursue the implications of the defendants' claim that this measure was reserved for the terminally ill, people who were, in the words of the defendant Josef Klehr, already "half dead."[647] Taking this into consideration, one could dispute that such euthanasia performed under the conditions then prevailing could really be considered murder, especially since - as is indubitably clear from the testimony of former inmates-it was undertaken only after medical treatment at the camp infirmary had failed to restore the health and working capacity of the invalid. In any case, these acts, which lead to the conviction of the defendants Josef Klehr, Herbert [278] Scherpe, and Emil Hantl, had nothing to do with the "genocide" usually associated with the word "Auschwitz."[648]

Nevertheless sixteen of the twenty defendants were charged with participating in legally punishable aiding and abetting in this much-cited "genocide." All the defendants who were convicted —with the exception of the trustee Emil Bednarek— were sentenced on the basis of this charge, either solely or in conjunction with other offences. One is astonished at the kind of acts that were sufficient for the court to convict defendants of this particularly grave crime.

The basis of these convictions was the court's supposition that Jews were killed *en masse* in various areas of the Auschwitz complex by means of the insecticide Zyklon B, as a rule directly after so-called selections, whether these took place in the infirmary, at the railway ramp upon the arrival of a new convoy of prisoners, or in some other part of the camp. The court proceeded on the assumption that all the unfit, among whom were reckoned "women with children, the elderly, cripples, the sick, and children under sixteen years of age," were sent to the "gas chambers" forthwith. According to the Auschwitz Trial opinion, only between 10 and 15 percent, seldom more, of a newly arrived convoy were "selected," for labour and never more than 25 percent, and now and then, it happened that a whole convoy was sent to the gas chamber."[649]

Here it must once again be emphasized that the court's whole ruling is simply based on supposition. As we have shown in the course of our inquiry, no solid and cogent proof of the existence of "gas chambers" has ever been produced, nor did the court demand it. Even the court's statistics lack any real, factual basis. They rest entirely on the speculations and assumptions of

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[646] Opinion, pp. 244ff., 246ff., 366ff., 395f.

* "Abspritzen" may be roughly translated as the "knock-off shot."-T.F.

[647] Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 90; Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 711.

[648] Opinion, pp. 96f.

[649] Significantly, the expert testimonies which are contained in *Anatomie des SS-Staates* make no definite pronouncements. Broszat gives a few hints in his footnote 1 on page 159 of *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, however, he must admit: "Exact clarification can hardly be attained here.» See Aretz regarding the alleged number of victims, in *Hexeneinmaleins*. There he deals with the discussion of the number of Jewish losses between the presiding judge and the expert witness Broszat.

"experts" from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, as well as some equally shaky witness testimony.[650]

Given this state of affairs, only the "confessions" of the defendants Stark and Hofmann (see pp. 327-330 above) regarding their own "participation" in the "gassing of Jews" lent the convictions a semblance of legal propriety, since they admitted to acts which could be directly related to the crime, if it did indeed occur.[651] But all the other defendants would have been acquitted had normal standards of penal jurisprudence been applied, at least on the charge of aiding and abetting in the alleged "gas chamber" murders. The charges levelled against them in this connection were simply ridiculous, and only go to show how little factual substance there is to the "gas chamber" legend.

According to the Frankfurt Assize Court, the following acts were enough to warrant its conviction of these defendants for aiding and abetting in the supposed "gas chamber" murders:

> Receiving and passing on teletype messages announcing the arrival of prisoner convoys (Robert Mulka and Karl Höcker);
>
> Procuring Zyklon B for the Disinfection Department of the camp and placing an [279] order for an airtight door with the firm Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (Robert Mulka);
>
> Being in command of the guards during the arrival of prisoners at the Auschwitz railway ramp (Robert Mulka);
>
> Standing guard at the railway ramp during the arrival of convoys of prisoners (Klaus Dylewski, Pery Broad, Franz Hofmann);
>
> Participating in the selection of prisoners at the Birkenau raüway ramp (Robert Mulka, Friedrich Wilhelm Boger, Dr. Willi Frank, Dr. Franz Lucas, Stefan Baretzki, Dr. Victor Capesius, Josef Klehr);
>
> Participating in the selection of prisoners in the infirmary or other parts of the camp (Herbert Scherpe, Josef Klehr, Emil Hantl, Stefan Baretzki, Bruno Schlage, Oswald Kaduk, Friedrich Wilhelm Boger).[652]

At the time of the Auschwitz Trial, the legally punishable offence of aiding and abetting, which now comes under §27 of the Penal Code (the StGB), was covered by §49. According to this statute, a person was subject to prosecution for aiding and abetting if he knowingly aided, by moral or physical force, the chief actor in the commission of a felony or misdemeanour. This is not the place to examine all the legal ramifications of the statute. Here it should be enough to adhere to the prevailing view that this offence consists in aiding the crime of another with the intent of promoting its accomplishment by such acts as are generally suited to that purpose. Such aid may be given in the preparatory stages of the crime. The act of aiding and abetting need not bear a causal relation to the main offence, in the sense that it could not have been committed without that support. It must, however, tend to further in some way ("by moral or physical force") the accomplishment of the act that forms the sum and substance of the crime (the so-called *corpus delicti*), for example, in

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[650] Hofmann was sentenced to life in prison for murder and participation in several gassings." His "testimony" apparently paid off. According to Butz (p. 188, *op. cit.*), he has been set free in the meantime. Stark was sentenced to 10 years of juvenile detention because he was only 18 years old at the time of his "deed," and the juvenile criminal law applied to him. He too was probably released early.

[651] See on all this the respective commentaries to Section 49 StGB (old version). It is not necessary here to go into the difficult distinction between accomplice and abettor. Since the "actions" of the defendants in the Auschwitz Trial were —as shown— so removed from the alleged murders, the problem does not arise here.

[652] On this see again pages 19f. above.

murder, the actual death of the victim. Naturally, all this presupposes that a crime has been committed, or, at least, attempted. Aiding and abetting is thus dependent (*akzessorisch*, as one says in German legalese) upon the main offence. Moreover, the accessory as well as the principle must act with premeditation. Likewise, he must know all the major circumstances of the crime, though he need not be aware of every detail of its execution. If he regards his actions as not tending to further the crime, if he sincerely believes that it would inevitable have been accomplished without his own contribution, then criminal intent is usually lacking, since intent on the part of the accessory, as well as the principal, must be directed towards the realization of the crime.[653]

If the definition of aiding and abetting recognized in every ordinary criminal trial were applied to the previously mentioned acts of the defendants, the jurist would have to regard their classification as aiding and abetting in the alleged "gas charnber" murders —for which there is no concrete evidence in each individual case, anyway— as downright false, or, at very least, questionable. The layman, too, can only shake his head in disbelief at the conviction of the defendants for "aiding and abetting" the "crime." Perhaps *raisons d'État* had something to do with these convictions?
[280]

It is hard to imagine how receiving and passing on wires or requisitioning Zyklon B and placing an order for an airtight door could be construed as "aiding and abetting in murder." None of Mulka's and Höcker's papershuffling could have had the slightest effect, one way or the other, on the arrival of convoys or the subsequent fate of the prisoners. The wires they received did not even contain orders to "gas" these people, which purportedly had already been given in some roundabout way.[654] Even if one proceeds on the assumption that Jews were "gassed," this activity on the part of the camp adjutants in no way tended to "further" the "commission of the crime," as the statute on aiding and abetting puts it. Likewise, there was nothing criminal in requisitioning Zyklon B or placing an order for an airtight door. In Auschwitz, as in every other concentration camp, as well as in the army, Zyklon B was used to disinfect buildings and clothing.[655] Airtight doors could be found everywhere during the war, in bunkers and air-raid shelters that certainly were not used to

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[653] On this see again pages 21ff. above. The situation appeared "rather simple" to the general prosecutor Dr. Fritz Bauer. In his report on the question of guilt, which he published in 1965 (contained in the publishing house H. Hammerschmidts collection entitled, *Zwanzig Jähre danach* [Twenty Years Ago], Munich-Vienna-Basel, 1965, pp. 301ff.), he wrote the following: "There was an order to exterminate millions of people in the Europe which was ruled by the Nazis. Auschwitz, Treblinka, etc. were tools for murder. Whoever laid a hand to this murder machinery became an accomplice to murder, regardless of what his role was." (Quoted after Anthologie, vol. 1, part 2, p. 255).

The wording and content of this statement are rather shocking coming from so prominent a lawyer, and quite revealing of his outlook. Not even the Auschwitz tribunal, which was also ruled by prejudice, stooped to so low a level.

[654] Compare no. 7 of his plea on the basic questions of June 10, 1965, in Laternser, *op. cit.*, pp. 185ff. It is interesting to note that the Münster Court of Assizes is supposed to have taken the same position in the trial of Kremer after his release from Polish imprisonment (see pp. 911. above). The court saw Kremer's abetting not in his participation in selections, but in the fact that he worked to protect the SS disinfectors during the 'special actions' and at the gas chambers" (Anthologie, vol. I, part 2, p. 48).

[655] In terms of the legend, therefore, a double role had to be attributed to the pesticide Zyklon B. See Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 104-109 concerning this.

"gas" Jews. Though the court may have believed that the door was "intended for a gas chamber," it failed to state the grounds for that belief. (According to the purchase order, the door was bought for the mortuary of crematorium III; see p. 53 above.) Since it was impossible to determine the use to which the Zyklon B and the door Mulka ordered were put, he should have been acquitted on the basis of the principle in *dubio pro reo* (in cases of doubt, decide in favour of the accused). One gets the definite impression that both Mulka and Höcker had to be convicted, since their acquittal would have clashed with the general picture and certainly have caused a great uproar.

Just as incredible is that the court saw participation in the "selections" at the Birkenau railway ramp as an act of aiding and abetting. Taken objectively, these "selections" had nothing in the least to do with the alleged "gassings" of the Jews. In fact, Laternser aptly contended that they saved the fives of part of the new arrivals, who, so the story goes, were *all* to be "gassed" right away, under express orders from the Führer."[656] If this were so, the "selection" of the fit would have been in disobedience to those orders, and doubtless saved many people from certain death. So far as I know, one tenet of the extermination legend that has never been disputed —it appears even in the Auschwitz Trial consultations— is that able-bodied Jews were spared from immediate "gassing" as a result of policy disagreements within the SS-hierarchy.[657] Since the court evidently accepted every tenet of the extermination legend, including this one, its ruling that participation in "selections" constituted punishable aiding and abetting in murder makes it rather obvious that it was under considerable pressure to convict the defendants-by whatever means.

Less ambiguous is the conviction of those defendants who did not "select" the new arrivals at the ramp, but stood guard, in order to prevent them from fleeing, as was always a possibility. Thus the act of aid[281]ing and abetting of these defendants consisted in ensuring that nobody destined for "gassing" escaped his fate, which, of course, presupposes that the arriving Jews were actually to be gassed and that the guards were aware of it. Even though the court proceeded on tWs unwarranted assumption, it should have made an effort to discover whether the defendants believed this act tended to "further" the gassing of the jews, or whether it would have inevitably occurred without their assistance. In the latter case, they should have been acquitted, on the basis of the statute cited above, because criminal intent was lacking.

All the above considerations regarding the part of the defendants in the "selections" would be meaningful only if —as we have noted—those "selections" led, in each and every case, to the "gassing" of the unfit. In the literature on Auschwitz, however, we find instances of prisoners unfit for work being received into the camp or transferred to special camps, *ergo* not "gassed."[658] Not only were the Auschwitz Trial judges unable to prove the opposite; they even confirmed it in the case of the defendant Oswald Kaduk —who had enough charges against him, already— when they ruled that, despite his participation

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[656] Reitlinger, *op. cit.*, p. 112; *Anatomie des SS-Staates*, vol. 2, pp. 129ff. (Broszat) and 391ff. (Krausnick).

A corresponding statement was put into the mouth of Rudolf Höss, significantly not until his Cracow writings. See *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, pp. 158f., 167ff. He had mentioned nothing of this at Nuremberg.

[657] See note 110 to Chapter 3 above. See also Butz, *The Hoax*, pp. 108ff.

[658] See also Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, p. 878.

in a number of "selections" of sick inmates at the camp, he could not be convicted, since it could not be proved "beyond a reasonable doubt" whether "those selected were gassed or transferred to another camp."[659] Why the court had these doubts with respect to only some "selections" is a mystery, for there is no tangible evidence to suggest that prisoners singled out as unfit to work in any "selection" were actually "gassed." Not even the precise dates of the various "selections" could be rehably determined. Given the general uncertainty about the subsequent fate of the "selectees," the defendants should not have been convicted on this count, if only because, as noted above, aiding and abetting is predicated on the proven occurrence of a main offence. Once again, it behooved the court to apply the principle *in dubio pro reo.* In the case of Oswald Kaduk, the court itself revealed the absurdity of the contention that the "selections" always meant "gassings."

In passing, let it be noted that the court showed a distinct lack of logic in its arbitrary estimates of the number of "victims" in these "selections. " Sometimes it was 750, others 1,000, still others as many as 2,000 people who- according to the verdict-found their way into the "gas chambers." There is no rational basis for these disparate estimates.[660]

That the Auschwitz Trial court could not determine in a single case precisely when the selection in which the defendants were involved took place, and whether the selectees were really gassed, is perhaps the legally most disputable point about the convictions. The fact that complicity depends upon the clear-cut occurrence of a main offence should have made it absolutely necessary to find out these things in each particular instance.
[282]

This leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the court reached its decision entirely on the basis of presumption. Its manner of adjudication bears a distressing resemblance to the methods of the medieval witch trials. In those days, the occurrence of the "crime" had only to be presumed, since basically it could not be proved. Even the most distinguished jurists of the time —for example, Benedikt Carpzow— were of the opinion that in the case of "crimes difficult to prove" one could dispense with inquiring into the objective basis of the deed if "presumption" spoke for its occurrence.[661] The medieval judges found themselves in the same position *vis-ä-vis* the demonstrability of fornication with the Devil at the Witches Sabbath as the "enlightened" judges of the 20th century do in regard to the murder of the Jews in '«gas chambers." They *had* to believe in such fictions, or else they would have been burned at the stake themselves. In a figurative sense, this also held true for the judges in the Auschwitz Trial.

This brings us to the end of our investigation. The final results leave no doubt that the Auschwitz legend is rooted not in historical actuality, but in the

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[659] In regard to the Hungarian transports, the court refers at one point, for example, to 1000 gas chamber victims per "selection" (according to Dr. Lucas) and then again to 2000 gas chamber victims per selection (according to Dr. Capesius), without explaining the different estimates (in the Opinion, page 492, 580f.); compare also Langbein, *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß*, vol. 2, pp. 889ff. Of course Dr. Lucas showed "insight," while Dr. Capesius denied everything. This came out in the sentencing: Dr. Lucas received onlwy three years and three months in prison, while Dr. Capesius was sentenced to nine years.

[660] Soldan/Heppe, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 322; see also pp. 195f.

[661] The text of the footnote is missing in the book [Note de l'AAARGH].

morass of muddled myth-making. There is not one shred of evidence for its historicity. The main pillars of the legend of the Auschwitz "extermination camp" —the Cracow Höss memoirs and the Auschwitz Trial— have proved too feeble to support it. What remains is for courageous and honest historians to make this clear to the international public. If this volume spurs them to do that, it has not been written in vain. Until then, may it provide intellectual ammunition and moral support to all those men and women of good will who are fighting against the defamation of the German past.

[283]

APPENDIX I

PARTIAL TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENT NG-2586-G*

PROSECUTION EXHIBIT 1452

EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE WANNSEE CONFERENCE, 20 JANUARY 1942, WITH FIFTEEN PERSONS PARTICIPATING, INCLUDING THE DEFENDANT STUCKART, AT WHICH PLANS FOR "THE FINAL SOLUTION OF THE JEWISH QUESTION" WERE DISCUSSED

[Stamp] Top Secret

30 copies - 16th copy

I. The following persons took part in the conference on the Final Solution of the Jewish problem held on 20 January 1942, Am Grossen Wannsee No. 56/58:

Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and Reichsamtsleiter Dr. Leibbrandt	Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories
State Secretary Dr. Stuckart	Reich Ministry of the Interior
State Secretary Neumann	Plenipotentiary for the Four Year Plan
State Secretary Dr. Freisler	Reich Ministry of Justice
State Secretary Dr. Bühler	Office of the Governor General
Under State Secretary Luther	Foreign Office
SS Colonel Klopfer	Party Chancellery
Ministerial Director Kritzinger	Reich Chancellery
[Handwritten] D III 29 Top Secret	
SS Major General Hofmann	Race and Settlement Main Office
SS Major General Müller	Reich Security Main Office
SS Lieutenant Colonel Eichmann	
SS Senior Colonel Dr. Schöngarth, Commander of the Security Police and the SD in the Government General	Security Police and SD
SS Major Dr. Lange, Commander of the Security Police and the SD for the General Districts Latvia, as representative of the Security Police and the SD for the Reich Commissariat for the Ostland	Security Police and SD

[284]

* Translation from NMT, Vol. XIII, pp. 210-217. Inasmuch as those who write in English on the "Final Solution" usually cite this abridged translation —even Dr. Butz does so— it seems advisable to reproduce that version here, despite its inaccuracies, or, rather, because of them. Our translation of the omitted passages is italicized and enclosed in brackets. -T.F.

II. At the beginning of the meeting the Chief of the Security Police and the SI), SS Lieutenant General Heydrich, reported his appointment by the Reich Marshal to service as Commissioner for the Preparation of the Final Solution of the European Jewish Problem, and pointed out that the officials had been invited to this conference in order to clear up the fundamental problems. The Reich Marshal's request to have a draft submitted to him on the organizational, factual, and material requirements with respect to the Final Solution of the European Jewish Problem [organisatorischen, sachlichen und materiellen Belange im Hinblick auf die Endlösung der europäischen Judenfrage] necessitated this previous general consultation by all the central offices directly concerned, in order that there should be coordination in the policy [Parallelisierung der Linienfüehrung].

The primary responsibility [Federführung] for the administrative handling of the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem will rest centrally with the Reich Leader SS and the Chief of the German Police (Chief of the Security Police and the SD)— regardless of geographic boundaries.

The Chief of the Security Police and the SD thereafter gave a brief review of the battle conducted up to now against these enemies. The most important aspects are—

a. Forcing the Jews out of the various fields of the community life of the German people.

b. Forcing the Jews out of the living space [Lebensraum] of the German people.

In execution of these efforts there was undertaken —as the only possible provisional solution— the acceleration of the emigration of the Jews from Reich territory on an intensified and methodical scale.

By decree of the Reich Marshal, a Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration was set up in January 1939, and the direction of this office was entrusted to the Chief of the Security Police and the SD. It had in particular the task

(a.) Of taking all steps for the *preparation* for an intensified emigration of the Jews.

(b.) Of *steering* the emigration stream.

(c.) Of expediting the emigration in *individual cases*.

[285]

The objective of these tasks [Aufgabenziel] was to clear the German living space of Jews in a legal way.

The disadvantages which such a forcing of emigration brought with it were clear to all the authorities. But in view of the lack of alternative solutions, they had to be accepted in the beginning.

[In the period that followed, emigration tasks were not only a German problem, but also a problem with which authorities in the countries of destination or emigration had to concern themselves. Financial difficulties, such as the raising of monetary requirements for entry and/or landing fees on the part of the various foreign governments, lack of ship berths, and the steady increase in immigration restrictions or bans, impeded the emigration effort extraordinarily. Despite these difficulties, from the time of the National Socialist assumption of power to the 30 October 1941 cut-off date, about 537,000 Jews in all emigrated:

from 30 January 1933 from original Reich territory . .	*c. 360, 000*
from 15 March 1938 from Austria	*c. 147,000*
from 15 March 1939 from the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia . .	*c. 30,000*

Financing for the emigration came from the Jews themselves and/or Jewish political organizations. In order to prevent a residue of proletarianized Jews, the principle was followed that wealthy Jews would have to finance the emigration of

impecunious Jews; hence a graduated levy or contribution towards the emigration effort assessed against their capital assets was employed to defray the expenses involved in the emigration of impecunious Jews.

Foreign currency was needed for the conversion of Reichmarks, as well as for entry requirements and landing fees. In order to spare the German foreign exchange reserves, Jewish financial institutions abroad were retained by jewish organizations here to provide foreign currency for exchange. As of 30 October 1941, these foreign Jews had made available by way of donations around $9,500,000.]

Meanwhile, in view of the dangers of an emigration during the war and in view of the possibilities in the east, the Reich Leader SS and Chief of the German Police has forbidden Jews to emigrate.

III. The emigration program has now been replaced by the evacuation of the Jews to the East as a further solution possibility, in accordance with previous authorization by the Fuehrer.[*]

These actions are of course to be regarded only as a temporary substitute; nonetheless, here already, the coming Final Solution [kommende Endlösungl of the Jewish Question is of great importance.

In the course of this Final Solution of the European Jewish Problem, approximately 11 million jews are involved. They are distributed among the individual countries as fällows:

[286]

Country	
A. Original Reich Territory [Altreich]	131,800
Austria	43,700
Eastern Territories	420,000
Government General	2,284,000
Bialystok	400,000
Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia	74,200
Estonia - free of Jews	
Latvia	3,500
Lithuania	34,000
Belgium	43,000
Denmark	5,600
France: Occupied territory	165,000
Unoccupied territory	700,000
Greece	69,600
The Netherlands	160,800
Norway	1,300
B. Bulgaria	48,000
England	330,000
Finland	2,300
Ireland	4,000
Italy, including Sardinia	58,000
Albania	200
Croatia	40,000
Portugal	3,000
Rumania, including Bessarabia	342,000
Sweden	8,000
Switzerland	18,000
Serbia	10,000
Slovakia	88,000
Spain	6,000
Turkey (European Part)	55,500
Hungary	742,800
USSR	5,000,000

[*] The original shows this paragraph underscored by hand and on the margin a large exclamation point covering the length of the paragraph. [footnote in NMT-T.F.]

Ukraine	2,994,684
White Russia, excluding Bialystok	446,484
TOTAL	Over 11,000,000

In the Jewish population figures given for the various foreign countries however, only those of Jewish faith are included as the stipulations for defining Jews along racial fines still are in part lacking there. *[The treatment of the problem in the individual countries will encounter certain difficulties with regard to the general attitude and interpretation, particularly in Hungary and Rumania. For example, in Rumania a Jew can acquire for cash documents officially certifying foreign citizenship.*

The influence of the Jews in all areas of the U.S.S.R. is well-known. In the European territory reside some 5,000,000 Jews; in the Asiatic territories, at most 1,250,000.

The professional classification of Jews resident in the European territory of the U. S. S. R. was approximately as follows:

[287]

in agriculture.....9.1%
urban workers..... 14.8%
in trade..... 20.0%
government employees..... 23.4%
in private professions
medicine, press, theatre, etc..... 32.7%]

Under proper direction the Jews should now in the course of the Final Solution [Endlösung] be brought to the East in a suitable way for use as labour. In big labour gangs, with separation of the sexes, the Jews capable of work are brought to these areas and employed in road building, in which task undoubtedly a great part will fall out through natural diminution [natürliche Verminderung].

The remnant that finally is about to survive all this —since this is undoubtedly the part with the strongest resistance— must be treated accordingly [entsprechend behandelt werden] since these people, ing a natural selection, are [*on release*] to be regarded as the germ cell of a new Jewish development. (See the experience of history.)

In the program of the practical execution of the Final Solution [Endlösung], Europe is combed through from the West to the East. The Reich area, including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, will have to be taken in advance, alone, for reasons of the housing problem and other social and political necessities.

The evacuated Jews are brought first group by group into the so-called transit ghettos, in order to be transported from there farther to the East.

An important prerequisite for the whole execution of the evacuation, so SS Lieutenant General Heydrich explained further, is the exact establishment of the category of persons who are to be included.

It is intended not to evacuate jews over 65 years of age, but to remove them to a ghetto for the aged —Theresienstadt is under construction.

Along with these old age categories —of the about 280,000 Jews who on 31 October 1941 were in Germany proper and in Austria perhaps 30 percent are over 65 years old— there will also be taken to the ghettos for the aged the Jews who were seriously wounded* and Jews with war decorations (Iron Cross, First Class). With this appropriate solution the many petitions for exceptions will be eliminated with one blow.

The beginning of the individual larger evacuation actions will be very much dependent on the military development. With regard to the handing of the Final Solution in the European areas occupied and influenced by us, it was proposed that the competent officials in the Foreign Office should confer with the competent specialists of the Security Police and the SD.

In Slovakia and Croatia the matter is no longer too difficult, as the most essential problems in this respect have already been solved there.

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In Rumania likewise the government has meanwhile appointed a Commissioner for Jewish Affairs. For settling the problem in Hungary it will be necessary in the near future to impose upon the Hungarian Government an adviser on Jewish problems.

With regard to taking up the preparation for the settling of the problems in Italy, SS Lieutenant General Heydrich thinks a liaison with the Police Chief in these matters is suitable.

* In the First World War. - Ed.

Under State Secretary Luther stated at this point that in a more basic treatment of this problem in a few countries, such as in the northern countries, difficulties would come up, and it is therefore advisable to postpone these countries for the time being. In consideration of the small number of Jews in question here this postponement constitutes no appreciable limitation anyway.

On the other hand, the Foreign Office sees no great difficulties for the south and west of Europe.

SS Major General Hofmann intends to ask to have an official of the Race and Settlement Main Office* sent along to Hungary for general orientation, when the affair is started there by the Chief of the Security Police and the SI). It was decided to assign this official of the Race and Settlement Main Office, who is not to be active, temporarily in the official capacity of assistant to the Police Attache.

IV. In the course of the Final Solution plans [Endlösungsvorhaben], the Nuremberg Laws are in certain degree to form the basis, and accordingly the complete settlement of the problem is to include also the solution of the mixed marriage and the Mischüng** problems.

In connection with a letter of the Chief of the Reich Chancellery, the Chief of the Security Police and the SD discussed the following points, for the time being theoretically:

1. *Treatment of the first degree Mischling*s.— First degree Mischlings are to be treated the same as Jews as regards the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem. From this treatment exception will be made in the case of -

a. First degree Mischlings married to persons of German blood, from whose marriage there are children (2nd degree Mischlings). These second degree Mischlings are to have essentially the same position as Germans.

b. First degree Mischlings for whom the exception approvals for certain groups have been accorded previously by the highest authorities of the Party and the State.

Each individual case must be examined and the possibility is not to be excluded that the decision may be retaken in the Mischüng's disfavour.

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Conditions for the granting of an exception must always be the fundamental merits of the Mischling concerned himself. (Not the merits of the racial German parent or marriage partner.)

The first degree Mischling excepted from the evacuation is to be sterilized in order to prevent any offspring and to settle the Mischling problem once and for all. The sterilization takes place on a voluntary basis. It is, however, the condition for remaining in the Reich. The sterilized Mischling is afterwards to be free from all restrictive stipulations to which he has previously been subject,

2. T*reatment of the second degree Mischlings*. - The second degree Mischlings are to be treated in principle like persons of German blood with the exception of the following cases in which the second degree Mischlings are to have the same position as Jews:

a. Derivation of the second degree Mischling from a bastard marriage (both parents Mischlings).

b. Racially especially unfavourable appearance of the second degree Mischling, so that even in appearance he is considered a Jew.

c. Especially bad police and political appraisal of the second degree Mischling which shows that he feels and conducts lümself fike a jew.

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* See the materials on the RuSHA case, Volumes IV and V, this series. [footnote in NMT-T.F.]

** Persons partly of Jewish descent. [footnote in NMT-T.F.]

But even in these cases exceptions are not to be made if the second degree Mischling is married to a person of German blood.

3. Marriages between full Jews and persons of German blood. - [Here it must be decided from case to case whether the Jewish partner will be evacuated or whether in consideration of the repercussions of such measures on the German relatives in this mixed marriage will be transferred to a ghetto for the aged.]

4. Marriages between first degree Mischlings and persons of German blood.—

[a. *Without children:*

If no children issued from the marriage, the first degree Mischling will be evacuated or placed in a ghetto for the aged. (Same treatment as for marriages between full Jews and those of German blood, Point 3.)

b. With children:

If no children issued from the marriage (second degree Mischlings), they will, if they are considered Jews, be evacuated together with the first degree Mischling or transferred to a ghetto for the aged. So far as these children are considered Germans *(as is usually the case), they are to be exempted from the evacuation, as is the first degree Mischling.]*

5. *Marriages between first degree Mischlings and first degree Mischlings or Jews. - [All parties in these marriages (including children) will be treated as Jews, hence evacuated, or, as the case may be, transferred to a ghetto for the aged.]*

6. Marriages between first degree Mischlings and second degree Mischlings. - [Both marriage partners will, regardless of whether there are children or not, be evacuated, or, as the case may be, placed in a ghetto for [290] *the aged, since any children will, as a rule, manifest a stronger Jewish racial strain than second degree Mischlings*.]

SS Gruppenführer Hofmann is of the opinion that extensive use must be made of sterilization; particularly since the Mischling, when confronted with the choice as to whether he is to be evacuated or sterilized, would prefer to submit to sterilization.

State Secretary Stuckart states that the practical execution of the possibilities just discussed for settling the mixed marriage and the Mischling problems in this way would entail an endless administrative task. On the other hand in order also to take into account in every event the biological actualities, State Secretary Dr. Stuckart suggested that compulsory sterilization be undertaken.

In order to simplify the mixed marriage problem, further possibilities must be considered with the objective that the legislation should perhaps say: “These marriages *shall be deemed dissolved*” [*sind* geschieden].

In connection with the problem of the effect of the Jewish evacuation on the economic life, State Secretary Neumann stated that the Jews employed in important war industries could not be evacuated for the present, as long as there were no replacements available.

SS Major General Heydrich pointed out that those Jews, in accordance with the directives approved by him, for the execution of the current evacuations, would not be evacuated.

State Secretary Dr. Bühler states that Government General would welcome *the initiation* of the Final Solution of this problem in the *Government General*, because here for once the transport problem plays no role out of the ordinary, and here labour commitment considerations would not hinder the course of this action. Jews would have to be removed as quickly as possible from the territory of the Government General because just here the Jew constitutes an eminent danger as a bearer of diseases and he otherwise brings the economic structure of the country constantly into disorder by his black market activities. Furthermore, of the approximately two

and one half million Jews here in question, the majority of cases are reported to be *unfit for work*.

State Seeretary Dr. Bühler further states that the solution of the Jewish problem in the Government General is primarily the responsibility of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD and his work is supported by the agencies of the Government General. He had only one request, that the Jewish problem in the territory be solved as quickly as possible.

In conclusion the various kinds of solutions were discussed, and here both Gauleiter Dr. Meyer and also State Secretary Dr. Bühler advocated that certain preparatory tasks in the course of the Final Solution be performed immediately in the territories concerned; in this however, any disturbing of the population must be avoided.

With this request of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD to [291] those participating in the conference to afford him their support in the carrying out of the tasks in connection with the solution, the conference was concluded.

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APPENDIX II

MY IMPRESSIONS OF THE AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP IN 1944-*

Following the example of District Court Justice von Briesen and the former army captain Nadolski, whose accounts of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp came to my attention this year, I have decided to set down my impressions of the Auschwitz concentration camp, which I formed on several visits to that camp in 1944. At the outset, I want to emphasize that I have not recalled these impressions to mind only now, or, as one might assume, as a result of the so-called Auschwitz Trial, but that I have been reflecting on these matters ever since the disastrous outcome of the war, when the most incredible depictions of the German concentration camps were put into circulation. In discussions with a great variety of people, I repeatedly expressed essentially the same views that I am expressing here. In 1965, one of the participants in several conversations I had with colleagues along these lines denounced me as a "neo-fascist" to the judicial authorities. Since my portrayal of Auschwitz could not have been far from the truth, I had no other choice than to stick to it in the resultant disciplinary proceeding. Nobody believed me, of course. It was merely conceded that I had been "deceived."

In 1944, I was an orderly officer on the staff of the 12th Paratroop Anti-aircraft Detachment. From mid-july to mid-September, my detachment was stationed in the vicinity of Auschwitz for the protection of industrial plants employing inmates of the camp. The detachment staff was headquartered in the village of Osiek, not far from Auschwitz. During this period, we received our food supply, or at least part of it, from the camp, which had, among other things, its own slaughterhouse and its own bakery. Together with the quartermaster and the adjutant of my detachment, I went to the camp a number of times. The purpose of our [293] first visit was to make arrangements for the victualing of the detachment. Another time, we inspected the camp by official invitation. If memory serves, I was inside the camp three or four times altogether. On none of these visits did I see gassing installations, crematoria, instruments of torture, or similar horrors. The camp gave one the impression of being well-kept and very well-organized. In addition to the workshops mentioned above, there was a cobbler's shop and a tailors's shop. Large barracks, outfitted with bunks,

¨ Dr. Stäglich's eyewitness account of Auschwitz formed part of a letter to the late Arthur Ehrhardt, editor of the monthly journal *Nation Europa*, dated December 23, 1967. Since Dr. Stäglich did not know of any witnesses who could corroborate his account, he requested Ehrhardt to refrain from publishing it for the time being. When Thies Christophersen's booklet *a* appeared in 1973, Dr. Stäglich released his account for publication because "Christophersen's account basically substantiates my own recollections of Auschwitz, though we did not know each other when we wrote our accounts." Dr. Stäglich's account was published in the October 1973 number of *Nation Europa*, under an editorial note explaining the background of the piece and noting that the writer was a judge still performing the duties of his office in Hamburg. After the publication of his account, Dr. Stäglich was subjected to another vexatious "disciplinary proceeding," which resulted in his retirement from the bench at a reduced pension. The accounts of Bergen-Belsen by Dr. von Briesen and Captain Nadolski, which Dr. Stäglich's mentions, appeared in the May 1968 issue of *Nation Europa*, together with a similar account by the Briton Cyril Connoly. -TY.

were provided for the housing of inmates. In the workshops, by the way, inmates only were employed. The camp reminded me of the German Labour Front camp in which I served out my six-month stretch in the Labour Service, except that Auschwitz was, of course, considerably larger.

On none of my visits did I find that inmates —at least the ones present in the camp, for example, inmates employed in the various workshops or on clean-up details— were badly, much less inhumanely, treated. In this respect, my impressions of Auschwitz are remarkably similar to Dr. von Briesen's impressions of Bergen-Belsen. On one of my visits, I noticed that each of the female inmates employed in the camp administrative offices —Jewesses, by the looks of them— had a bottle of milk on her desk. None of the inmates behaved as though they were in fear of mistreatment, let alone death.

On the latter point, one encounter with inmates especially sticks in my memory. As some comrades and I were standing near the camp one evening, we caught sight of a big gang of inmates returning to camp from work in the industrial plants. They were escorted by a relatively small contingent of SS-men —mostly older people— and seemed to be thoroughly undisciplined. They talked loudly among themselves, laughing all the while. Two or three inmates dropped out of line when they spotted us, opened their flies, and made water. Although this gesture could have been interpreted as a sign of contempt for German men in uniform, the SS guards ignored it completely. Later, whenever I heard that mortal terror prevailed in the concentration camps, I had to recall this incident. That is hardly the way people who are in constant fear of death behave.

Finally, I can report that the German residents of Osiek were unaware of mass exterminations or other atrocities in the camp. At any rate, they never spoke to me of such things.

As an afterthought, I should like to mention the following: In the Dachau Concentration Camp Museum, there is a picture captioned “Auschwitz cremation ovens.” They reminded me of the baking ovens shown to us by an inmate working in the camp bakery.

Wilhelm Stäglich
Hamburg

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APPENDIX III

AN EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE AUTHOR AND THE INSTITUT FUR ZEITGESCHICHTE*

Author's letter to the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich, dated March 14,1975:

Gentlemen:

As an aid in my effort to gain an insight into the "Final Solution of the Jewish Problem," I should appreciate your prompt reply to the following questions:

(1) Have any documents been found that show Hitler, or some other leading official of the Reich, ordered the physical annihilation of all Jews residing in German-controlled territory?

(2) Are there any documents revealing that the Auschwitz concentration camp was designed to serve as an "extermination camp"?

(3) Are there any documents revealing that Birkenau, near Auschwitz, was equipped with "gas chambers," and how they might have been procured and how they might have operated?

(4) Do you know of any other sources of information relevant to items 1 to 3 above?

(5) Do you know how many Jews altogether may have perished in Auschwitz and its subsidiary camps - in particular, Birkenau - during the Second World War, and how many of those through gassing? What would be the basis for any estimate you might make?

Also, I should be grateful if you provided me with a list, as complete as possible, of the available literature on the Auschwitz camp. If you so desire, I will reimburse you for any costs incurred.

Sincerely,
Dr. Wilhelm. Stäglich

Author's letter to the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich, dated April 23, 1975.

Re.: My letter of March 14, 1975 on gas chambers in Auschwitz.

Gentlemen:

In the aforementioned letter, I asked you to answer a few questions I was told you would be capable of answering. It seems, however, that [295] my request poses some difficulty for you. At any rate, I have yet to receive a reply to my letter or even an acknowledgement of it. If your difficulty in replying to my letter has to do with the fact that documentary and other evidence on this subject is so abundant that fulfilling my request would demand a great deal of work, then I would be grateful if you cited for me just the most important documents and other evidential material, which you must surely have at your disposal. After going over it, I might have some additional questions.

* The documents in the following appendices should give the reader an idea of how difficult it is to get a look at the evidence for the charge that Auschwitz was an "extermination camp." Official support is evidently granted only to those researchers whose work is likely to conform to the prescribed line. -W. S.

As to my request for references to published works, I would be satisfied with a list of the most important ones.

Hoping that I have not turned to you in vain for answers to these important questions, I remain

Sincerely,
-Dr. Wilhelm Stäglich

Letter to the author from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, dated April 25, 1975:

Re.: Your letter of March 14, 1975.

Dear Dr. Staeglich:

Enclosed you will find a select bibliography on the Auschwitz concentration camp, from Hermann Langbein's book *Menschen in Auschwitz*, published by Europa Verlag in 1972.

If you desire a full listing of the literature on this subject, we suggest that you address your request to

Deutsche Bibliothek Frankfurt,
6 Frankfurt am Main,
Zeppelinallee 8

With the aid of the extensive scholarly literature on this subject, you should be able to obtain basic information on the general subject of the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem.

Very truly yours,

Dr. I. Arndt
on behalf of the Institute

Author's letter to the Director of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, dated May 22, 1975:

Re.: Auschwitz; my letters of March 14 and April 23, 1975.

Subject: Your reply of April 25, 1975 (signed by Dr. I. Arndt).
[296]

Dear Professor Broszat:

In my letter dated March 14, 1975, I addressed to your institution detailed and very specific questions concerning the so-called Final Solution in Auschwitz. On April 23, 1975, I sent you a reminder to answer my query.

On my return from a lengthy trip abroad, I found the response from your colleague Dr. Arndt. Basically, it consisted of a photocopy of the bibliography in Hermann Langbein's book *Menschen in Auschwitz*. Since that is of no use to me, I am returning it herewith to your institute.

In my letter of March 14, 1975, I did indeed express my interest in a list of scholarly literature on Auschwitz. However, Langbein is no scholar. I am familiar, by the way, with his book *Menschen in Auschwitz*, as I am with the German-language literature mentioned in his bibliography, only a small part of which may be considered scholarly.

The main part of my query —the actual questions— was answered by Dr. Arndt with the remark that “with the aid of the extensive scholarly literature...” I should be able to “obtain basic information on the general subject of the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem.” Of course, that is what I have been trying to do for many years, and I have yet to find any straightforward answers to the questions that I raised in my letter. That is precisely why I turned to your institute, which, I was given to

understand, should be well-equipped to furnish me with documents and other evidential material.

1 should be very grateful to you, Professor, if you would see to it that my questions were answered as clearly as I asked them.

Sincerely,
Dr. Wilhelm Stäglich

Letter to the author from the Director of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, dated June 10, 1975:

Dear Dr. Stäglich:

In answer to your letter of May 22, 1975, I submit the following:

As much as we try, it is not always possible for the Institute to answer private queries —even those which are prompted by a scholarly interest— as fully as those who make them may wish, since we must give priority to our tasks of research and publishing. This is particularly true when, like your letter of March 14, 1975, they contain multi-layered questions, each one of which would require discussion of complicated sets of circumstances and could hardly be dealt with simply by citing particular documents. Many people who address questions to us are thus proceeding on the basis of a false assumption.

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Please understand why, under these circumstances, our spokeswoman Dr. Arndt had to confine herself to referring you to the published literature. The Institute cannot permit everybody who comes along with a question to dictate the nature and scope of its research and scholarship.

Very truly yours,
Dr. Martin Broszat

Author's letter to the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, dated June 25, 1975:

Re.: My inquiry of March 14, 1975 on the "Final Solution of the Jewish Problem."
Subject: Your letter of June 10, 1975.

Dear Professor Broszat:

Considering that I explained to you that my purpose was to clarify a historical issue, one that, despite the assurances of the mass media that it has already been sufficiently explained, remains surrounded by mystery, your letter of June 10, 1975 was hardly a proper response to my inquiries. However, I shall have to live with your decision, since I certainly cannot force you to do as I requested. You must realize, of course, that I will draw my own conclusions from your evasive attitude.

By no means did I ask "multi-layered questions." I simply requested documents or other evidence to substantiate certain statements that fly in the face of common sense, for example, statements involving virtually incredible assertions about technical processes. Either the documents exist —and I would have been satisfied had you cited just some of them— or they do not. In the way you formulated your reply I sense a veiled admission that, to this day, no unimpeachable and unambiguous documentary evidence has been found for these monstrous allegations, which, as is well known, were first made in Allied war propaganda. Your statement that the Institute cannot allow the "nature and scope of its research and scholarship" to be "dictated" also forces me to the conclusion that you are evading the issue. Anyway, I did nothing of the kind.

On page 8 of his book *...wir haben es getan* (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1964), which is "dedicated to skeptics," Hermann Langbein, whom your colleague Dr. Arndt

introduced into the discussion —and who, for a number of reasons, is a highly dubious source of information— writes: “To scholars the facts are clear.”

My correspondence with your institute makes me sure this statement is untrue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wilhelm. Stäglich

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APPENDIX IV

DENIAL OF ACCESS TO THE FILES OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST DR. JOHANN PAUL KREMER

In a letter dated June 10, 1976, I asked the presiding judge of the Regional Court in Münster for permission to examine the files of the proceedings against the onetime Auschwitz camp physician Dr. Johann Paul Kremer (Az. 6d Js 473/58), for a scholarly work on the Auschwitz concentration camp. As requested by the District Attorney's Office in Münster, I explained my purposes, in a letter dated July 9, 1976, referring in that context to Kremer's diary. In that letter, I stated, *inter alia*:

> Since a number of fundamental passages in the diary —at least in the published version— are not without ambiguity, I believe that it is important to find out what, if anything, Kremer said about these matters under interrogation. To establish the facts, I would have to see the files. If the original of his diary is in those files, I should like to see it, too.

On September 9, 1976, having waited two months for a reply, I sent a reminder. It produced no results. When an additional reminder, dated November 10, 1976 —more than six months after my original request— failed to elicit a reply, I filed a complaint with the Attorney General in Hamm. Only then did the District Attorney's Office see fit to send me a reply:

> We cannot allow you to examine the files, for under current regulations (Nr. 195, Abs. 1, *Richtlinien für das Straf- und Bußgeldverfahren*) private individuals are not, as a general rule, permitted to examine trial records.

In my complaint to the Attorney General's Office in Hamm, I stated:

> The District Attorney's Office denied me access to the files on the grounds that private individuals are not, as a general rule, permitted to examine the files of judicial proceedings. To every rule, however, there is an exception. I made it known that I needed to examine the files in question for my scholarly research work, as I explained in my letter of July 9, 1976. Such allowance is made in § 185, Abs. 3 of the *Richtlinien*, in effect as of January 1, 1977. It reads: "Files may be made available to scholars if the importance of their work warrants it and so long as there is no danger that they will misuse the information thus obtained (cited after Kleinknecht, StPO, 33 Aull. 1977)."
>
> 1 am convinced that I meet all these requirements and that there should be no objection to my examining the files, especially since Dr. Kremer has by this time most likely passed away.

The Attorney General was of a different opinion. On March 11, 1977, he decided that

> According to § 185, Abs. 5, RiStBV, private individuals are not, as a general rule, permitted to examine judicial files, the one exception being that access might be granted to scholars if the importance of their research justified it and there were no danger of abuse.

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> You have not demonstrated that your research is of scholarly significance. You also have not presented attestation from some institution that your work is of importance to the study of modem history. In your letter of July 9, 1976 to the District Attorney's Office in Münster, you stated that your work is of a private nature, i.e., it is not supported by an institution or organization. You also had not yet decided whether or not you wanted to submit your research work to the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich.
>
> Your merely private interest does not meet the requirements for examination of files as specified in Nr. 185, RiStBV. I must therefore reject your complaint.

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APPENDIX V

DENIAL OF ACCESS TO THE FILES OF THE FIRST FRANKFURT AUSCHWITZ TRIAL

In a letter dated June 10, 1976, I asked the presiding judge of the Frankfurt Regional Court for permission to examine the files of the first of the "Auschwitz Trial" held in Frankfurt (Strafsache 4 Ks 2163 gegen Mulka und andere), As requested by the Frankfurt District Attorney's Office, on July 2, 1976, I outlined the reasons for my petition, in a letter dated July 9, 1976. On September 9, 1976 -exactly two months later -I sent a reminder to grant my petition. On September 30, 1976, the District Attorney's Office replied that my request had been forwarded to the Hessian Minister of Justice in Wiesbaden. Apparently, the District Attorney was unable to reach a decision on his own, even though the matter came under his jurisdiction.

In his letter to me of November 26, 1976, the Hessian Minister of Justice denied me permission to examine the files, with the explanation that, according to the *Richtlinien für das Strafverfahren*, private citizens and private institutions are not, as a general rule, permitted to examine the files of criminal cases.

In a letter dated December 10, 1976, I asked for reconsideration of my request, stating, inter alia:

> I cannot imagine that the legal situation is so clear-cut as you make it out to be, for if that were the case, the District Attorney in Frankfurt could have reached a decision about my petition on his own. I did not request to examine the files for private reasons as a private citizen, but for my scholarly work, from which, as I pointed out in my letter to you of July 9, 1976, we all will benefit. Today, the whole world bases its picture of Auschwitz on the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. It should be possible for a private citizen who is doing research on this historical issue to evaluate the evidence which led to the judicial decision in that trial. Surely, the purpose of the rule you cited is not to hinder such research?

My plea fell on deaf ears. Again denying me permission to examine the files, the Minister of Justice declared:

> After reviewing your request, I am unable to grant you access to the files. The protection of the interests of the trial participants takes priority over the scholarly research of a private individual.

The question is: Whose interests are to be protected —and from what? Had a Jew made this request, would he have received this or a similar answer? I dare say not!

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APPENDIX VI

AN EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE AUTHOR AND THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

Author's letter to the International Red Cross in Geneva, dated March 29, 1978:

Le comité international de la Croix-Rouge,
7 Avenue de la Paix,
Geneva,
Switzerland.

Att.: The President.

Dear Sir:

Before me is issue No. 25 of the bulletin of your press and public relations department, dated February 1, 1978, where, in a piece entitled "Lying Propaganda," an irresponsible and deliberate attempt is made to mislead the public. This official statement, which is difficult to reconcile with the reputation of the International Red Cross as an independent and neutral organization, cannot go unchallenged.

First of all, I must ask: Who or what induced you to describe as "adroitly concocted pamphlets" the revisionist studies independent scholars have made on the allegation that genocide was committed in German concentration camps, studies which become more numerous with each year that passes? Maybe you are unqualified to pass judgement here, for you do not seem to be very well acquainted with this body of literature. At least, you faded to mention the most important research done in the field, that of the French historian Paul Rassinier and the American university professor Arthur Butz, whose book *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* was published last year.

Furthermore, what is your justification for labelling the German concentration camps as "extermination camps" pure and simple? On what source of information do you base your charge that "planned genocide" took place in those camps? Statements in a documentary work put out by your organization, *Die Tätigkeit des IKRK zugunsten der in den deutschen Konzentrationslagern inhaftierten Zivilpersonen (1939-1945)*, which is mentioned in the aforesaid bulletin, tend to prove the opposite. Several passages in this documentary work show, by the way, that the German concentration camps were model internment facilities. Many German soldiers —I among them— would have been glad to live in such well-run camps when they were prisoners of war. I might add that our fate after the defeat of Germany was not of the slightest interest to your organization.

It may very well be true that your delegates entered few of the concentration camps before 1945. However, one of your delegations did inspect Auschwitz, allegedly the greatest extermination camp of them all, [302] in September of 1944. According to the previously mentioned documentary work of yours, your delegates found no trace of gas chambers or any of the supposed corollaries of the alleged mass exterminations —the stench of corpses and cremations in the open. Incidentally, certain passages have been deleted from the published version of the report of the Auschwitz delegation. They could hardly have contained anything that reflects badly

on Germany. Certainly, the public would be interested in seeing the unabridged report. Only in the report of the Dachau delegation is a "gas chamber" mentioned. Since then, historians have proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the "Dachau gas chamber" was a hoax. When will you get around to setting the record straight?

And why did you fail to mention, in issue No. 25 of your bulletin, the reason that the International Red Gross could not do its good works in the concentration camps? According to the documentary work previously mentioned, the blame clearly lies with the nations allied against Germany. At that time, there was no reciprocal international agreement that would have enabled the International Red Cross to aid interned civilians. Your attempts to bring about such an agreement foundered, as is well known, on the position of the Allies. Only the German government had, at your urging, declared itself prepared to accept such an agreement.

Just as the other states sabotaged the disarmament proposals of the Reich Government and the ban on aerial warfare against civilians that was suggested by none other than Hitler, so they sabotaged the measures to protect and aid interned civilians proposed by your organization. As your documentary work makes clear, the enemies of the Reich even hindered the efforts of the Red Cross to get supply parcels into the concentration camps, something the Reich Government had, as is well known, permitted for humanitarian reasons, without having obtained a guarantee of reciprocity from its enemies. Given these facts, which side can be said to have violated the principles of humane conduct?

There is no point in getting involved in disputes over the number of casualties in the war. However, it is difficult to comprehend why you now suddenly feel it necessary to qualify —or even reverse yourself on— your previous estimates of the number of Jewish fatalities. Again, one might ask: Who put you up to it? It should make even you wonder that by 1965 the number of Jewish petitioners for reparations had surpassed the number of Jews who had resided in German-controlled territory, so far as Harwood has his statistics right (*Did Six Million Really Die?*, pp. 6 and 7).

For the sake of its reputation, the International Red Cross should revise its position on Zionist atrocity propaganda as soon as possible. It is to be hoped that your organization will also take effective steps to secure the release of all victims of post-war judicial witch-hunting —an in[303]justice for which German, as well as foreign, courts are to blame and which is symbolized by the martyrdom of the aged Rudolf Hess— and that it will take a stand against continuing "war crimes" prosecutions thirty-three years after the end of the war.

In the hope that my admonitions will not be without effect, I remain

Sincerely,

Wilhelm Stäglich

Copies:

Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Hamburg
Der Spiegel
Die Zeit
Die Welt
Associated Press, Hamburg
Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsbtatt
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
and others.

Reply of the International Red Cross, Geneva, dated April 28, 1978

Dear Dr. Stäglich:

Unfortunately, it was not possible for us to answer your communication of March 29, 1978 earlier, since the persons who handle such correspondence were away (e.g., on holiday, on assignment).

For a start, we should like to state that we possess the greater part of the books on the drama of the deportation of the Jews —not only those you mention, but also those which treat the subject from a different point of view.

Every historical event calls forth scholarly analyses, the conclusions of which are, naturally enough, quite different, influenced as they are by the affiliations and personal temperament of the author, or by some interested party. It is not the role of the International Red Cross to undertake its own interpretation of historical calamities. The role of the Red Cross is to intervene on behalf of the victims —no matter what their ethnic origin or numbers —while those events are taking place. When our delegates were finally able to reach the inmates of German concentration camps, they did not ask whether an inmate was a militant Communist, a Polish priest, or a Jewish tailor, and it was hardly their purpose to take a census.

As to our first contact with the deportees, you are in error that we were able to get a delegation into Auschwitz in September of 1944. Our report expressly states that our delegates never got past the camp commandant's office.

However, let us not get caught up in details, but come right to the heart of the matter and to the cause of our misunderstanding. In the final paragraph of your letter, you write:

> There is no point in getting involved in disputes over the number of casualties in the war. However, it is difficult to comprehend why you now suddenly feel it [304] necessary to qualify —or even reverse yourself on— your previous estimates of the number of Jewish fatalities. Again, one might ask: Who put you up to it?

Here we can only express our astonishment that a man of your education should fall victim to the lying propaganda —you will see that the adjective is none too strong— we denounced in our bulletin of February 1. Before us is the document that has for twenty years been cited in this propaganda campaign, an article that appeared in the January 19, 1955 issue of the newspaper *Die Tat*. It contains a survey of the loss of human life caused by the Second World War, and gives 300,000 as the total number of Germans —Jews and non-Jews— who perished as a result of political or racial persecution. From the enclosed photocopy you will see how the German periodical *Unabhängige Nachrichten* uses this statistic. You will see that there it is deprived of its real meaning, since the word “German” has been carefully removed to give the impression that 300,000 is the total number of victims of every racial background, and, in order to lend additional plausibility to this fraud, the name of the “International Red Cross in Switzerland” is invoked.

Recently an article has come into our hands that is evidently the first link in this chain of frauds and shameless distortions of the facts. It appeared in the *Cannstätter Zeitung* for May 12, 1956. You may make up your own mind about it.

Owing to this kind of junk —we could cite more examples— we have received a flood of letters, most of them from people who were seeking balm for the most painful time in their national history.

For years we patiently answered each of these correspondents, without publicly announcing our position, until the day we discovered the perpetrators of the fraud took our reticence as an admission or as a sign of cowardice —we are referring here to the *Unabhängige Nachrichten*.

The International Red Cross cannot tolerate the deceitful use of its name to give credibility to a position it never took.

Very truly yours,
P. Vilbert
Director of the Publications
and Documentation Department

P. S.: A copy of this communication is being sent to the newspapers and news agencies that received your letter.

Enclosed with this letter were photographic reproductions of the articles in Die Tat for January 19, 1955, the Cannstätter Zeitung *for May 22, 1956, and the* Unabhängige Nachrichten *for October, 1975, or, as the case may be, a reprint from the latter in which the figure given in the* Cannstätter Zeitung *article is repeated. All of these reports in fact corroborated the 300, 000 figure:*

[305]

> *Die Tat*: In the prisons, concentration camps, etc. 300,000 Germans, including German Jews, died as a result of political, racial, or religious persecution from 1939 to 1945.
>
> *Cannstätter Zeitung*. Number of persons who perished in the concentration camps as victims of political, racial, or religious persecution: 300,000

Here it must be noted that the Cannstätter Zeitung *article includes the following statement:*

> On the other hand, the Red Cross gives the number of civilian losses in the eastern and southern European states —excluding Soviet Russia— as 8,010,000... This is an enormous number, which certainly must include many Polish, Hungarian, and Rumanian Jews.

Thus there can be no question of "fraud." Rather, the question is: Did the International Red Cross actually classify concentration camp victims according to their nationality? If it did, then it should be able to document the number of concentration camp victims of other nationalities, not just those of German nationality. Moreover, the phrase "racial, political, and religious persecution" is misleading to say the least. These figures would seem to embrace hardened criminals, derelicts, and homosexuals apparently the majority of concentration camp inmates fell into those categories —unless the Red Cross has separate documentation of their numbers, too.

Author's letter to the International Red Cross, Geneva, dated April 28, 1978:

Re.: Your bulletin of February 1, 1978 (No. 25); my open letter concerning it of March 29, 1978.
Subject: Your letter to me of April 28, 1978.

Dear Mr. Vilbert:

Your answer to my open letter addressed to the president of your organization contains the following statement in regard to the deportations of Jews carried out during the Second World War:

> It is not the role of the International Red Cross to undertake its own interpretation of historical calamities. The role of the Red Cross is to intervene on behalf of the victims —no matter what their ethnic origin or numbers— while those events are taking place.

With that I agree. Unfortunately, you did not observe this rule in the publication of yours to which I voiced my objections. Your lack of neutrality was precisely what occasioned my open letter. You cannot have failed to notice that my letter was, first and foremost, a protest against the shameless arrogance with which your purportedly neutral organization represented anti-German atrocity canards as historical [306] facts. It is significant that you completely ignored the reason for my letter.

On the subject of the visit by your delegation to Auschwitz in 1944, you state that the delegation "never got past the camp commandant's office." Well, the published text of the report in question is by no means so clear on that point, and, I might add that some passages in this report were —as I noted in my letter— deleted from the published version. Likewise, there does not seem to be any truth to your current claim that the September 1944 Auschwitz visit was your first contact with the deportees. Long before, the International Red Cross had gained entry to the Theresienstadt camp, to give but one example.

Instead of coming to grips with the real point of my letter, you expended a lot of verbiage on a matter I mentioned only in passing and do not consider especially important. I can hardly dispute your right to defend yourself against what you consider the false attribution to you of a statistic. But your argument that other publications derived the statistic they quoted from the Swiss newspaper *Die Tat* of its real meaning when they omitted the word "German" is not very convincing. That the report in *Die Tat* may be somewhat more precise here than the one in the *Cannstätter Zeitung*, for example, is beside the point. In fact, the *Cannstätter Zeitung* article perhaps deserves greater credence, since the International Tracing Service in Arolsen (a German branch of your organization) stated, in its report on its activities for the year 1974, that there were only 351,760 registered deaths of concentration camp inmates —a figure which seems to be a logical extension of the one given by the *Cannstätter Zeitung* in 1955. There is no reliable evidence for the claim recently made on the radio that the actual number of deaths in the concentration camps was significantly higher than the one given in the aforementioned report of the International Tracing Service.

Indeed, the figures given by both the *Cannstätter Zeitung* and the International Tracing Service may be too high rather than too low, since one must take into consideration the fact that deportees whom friends and relatives reported as dead might have wound up living in other countries or under different names after the war. Duplication of missing persons reports —as might occur, for example, if two individuals reported each other as "missing"— would itself account for an increase of presumed fatalities (see Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 242-243).

Only the Red Cross can determine the extent to which the discrepancies in reports on the number of fatalities can be traced back to its own press releases of the period, which I should very much like to see. After all, what group was in a better position than the Red Cross to inform the press about such matters?

Finally, I should like to express my hope that in the future, at least, the International Red Cross will adhere to the precept you set forth in [307] the third paragraph of your letter to me of April 28, namely, "not to undertake its own interpretation" of events. We Germans are no longer going to put up with the lies

about our nation that the Zionist imperialists have spread throughout the world — least of all when they come from a purportedly “neutral” organization.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stäglich

P.S.: You may regard this communication, too, as an open letter.